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Speedily will be Published,

The Letters written between THEO-
DORUS and CONSTANTIA, after
EFFUSIONS

Now first published from the original Ma-
nuscripts.

FRIENDSHIP

AND
CONSTANTIA

AND
FRIENDSHIP

VOL. II.

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The Letters that passed between THEO-
DOSIUS and CONSTANTIA, after
she had taken the Vow.

Now first published from the original Ma-
nuscripts.

*These Letters are yet extant in the Nunnery,
where Constantia resided, and are often read to
the young Religious to inspire them with good Re-
solutions, and Sentiments of Virtue.*

ADDISON.

THE
EFFUSIONS
OF
FRIENDSHIP
AND
FANCY.

In several LETTERS to and from
SELECT FRIENDS.

VOL. II.

L O N D O N :

Printed for T. BECKET and P. A. DE
HONDY, in the Strand. MDCCLXIII.



In Retail L. E. T. R. S. and from
select libraries

VOL. II

L O N D O N

Printed for W. Baskett and P. A. B. at
Hobart in the Strand. MDCCLXXII

LETTER I.

To Mrs. _____

On the Death of her Daughter.

IF I have not been so early as the rest of your friends, in condoling with you upon your late affecting loss, it was because I was unwilling to interrupt you in the first stages of your grief. I had moreover sorrows of my own to soothe—I had tears of my own to dry up, which, had they mingled with yours, would have increased our common distress. This, however, was not the principal reason why I have delayed to visit you, or to write to you. I would have waited upon you while my heart and my eyes were yet full of your misfortune, had I not been sensible that

VOL. II.

B

every

every argument I could have used on the behalf of content or comfort, would then have been ineffectual, and also that, by being repeated, they would have had the less weight now. Under the first attacks of extreme sorrow nature is to be left to herself. At such a time the consolations of friendship, by their infectious tenderness relax the tone of the heart, and encrease the sensibility of the sufferer; yet there is a season in affliction when the consolations of friendship may be useful: As the same medicine, which, taken in the height of a fever, would infallibly increase it, will, if administered at a proper interval, prevent its return. It is the business of friendship and philosophy rather to prevent sorrow from growing into habit, than to defend the heart from its first influences. The one is a natural, the other a moral evil, and it is in the latter only that the precepts of the moralist can be of use. Thus much, Madam, to apologize

to gize for my past conduct, and to give greater force to what I have now to say.

That you may be willing to give up the company of *Sorrow*, consider the nature and qualities of your companion. Her constant business is to draw gloomy and dejecting images of life; to anticipate the hour of misery, and to prolong it when it is arrived. Peace of mind and contentment fly from her haunts, and the amiable graces of chearfulness die beneath her influence. Sorrow is an enemy to virtue, while it destroys that chearful habit of mind that cherishes and supports it; it is an enemy to piety; for with what language shall we address that Being, whose providence our complaints either accuse or deny? It is an enemy to health, which depends greatly on the freedom and vigour of the animal spirits; and of happiness it is the reverse. Such,

B 2

Madam,

Madam, is the genuine disposition, and such are the qualities of Sorrow: And will you admit such an enemy to your bosom? Her sacrifices are the aching heart and the sleepless eye, the deep-searching groan, and the silent tear—Will you become a votary to such a fiend? A fiend that would rob your creator of his honour, the world of your virtue, and yourself of your happiness. Yet farther, it will rob your friends of your affection—here think me self-interested if you please; but what I advance is true: Sorrow will deprive your friends of your affection. The heart that has been long a prey to misery gradually loses its sensibility—gloomy and unsocial habits succeed, and the love of human kind is at last absorbed in the stagnation of melancholy. A sad situation this! but too often the effect of sorrow unseasonably continued and indulged.

But

But shall we, Madam, enquire into the cause of this sorrow, which, possibly, you may say with Shakespear, is *too great to be patched with proverbs*? Is it on the account of her whom you lament, or on your own?

"No," you answer: "it is on the account of my dear child. Shall I not bewail the cruelty of her destiny, cut off from the fairest hopes in the very bloom and vigour of life? Alas! is this the end of a virtuous and elegant education? My poor Harriot! what does it now avail that you neglected the trifling amusements and vain pursuits of your sex, to acquire a taste for the finer enjoyments of the mind? Surely long happiness was due to you who had taken such pains to deserve it! Dear creature! had she lived to adorn the married state, her amiable sincerity, her natural politeness, and, above all, the virtuous sensibility of her heart would have completed

"her own happiness by insuring that of her
 "husband."—— All this, Madam, you
 might say, and the mother's affection exagger-
 rate no circumstance. But this must have
 been said upon a supposition that life, while
 it continues, cannot but be happy; or at
 least that virtue and excellence must infallibly
 produce happiness. These, however, are con-
 clusions which none of the best observers of
 human life have admitted. Happiness may
 be destroyed by many circumstances which it
 is not in the power of virtue to prevent. It
 is far from being impossible, Madam, that the
 lady, whose death you so passionately lament,
 may by that death be exempted from many
 evils. How many has the pale tyrant unmer-
 cifully spared! What a lasting affliction must
 it have been to you, had the noble mind of
 your Harriot been doomed to suffer imprison-
 ment in a feeble and unhealthy body! Had
 the fair rose been early blasted, and the root
 cruelly

cruelly suffered to live, and pine away gradually through a course of delightful years! Moreover, as beauty is no charm against the natural evils of life, so neither is virtue always a defence against its moral evils. — Your amiable Harriot, with all her accomplishments, might have been unfortunately united to splendid intemperance, or wealthy avarice! Her virtues might have become the object of promiscuous ridicule, or misinterpreting ill-nature; and her person might have administered chagrin to negligence, or fuel to jealousy. In such circumstances I suppose the sensibility of her heart would have been far from defending it from misery; and the consciousness of her own integrity would have afforded her little relief; when the only person whose esteem it should principally have procured her, looked upon her with coldness or aversion. You know, Madam, that these are no uncommon

evils ; and though Harriot was every way wor-
 thy of a better fate, she might nevertheless
 have had her lot amongst the multitudes that
 suffer and complain. Neither would the
 cruelty or the negligence of a husband have
 been the only evils that would have endangered
 her peace : It would have been equally ex-
 posed to ruin by the follies and vices of a
 child ; or, what is the case of few parents,
 had she met with no ingratitude and beheld
 no wretchedness in her off-spring, her gentle
 heart might have been wounded, like the
 heart which these arguments are directed
 to set at ease, by the early death of a be-
 loved child. Consider, Madam, too that
 by her earlier death she has escaped those sor-
 rows she would have suffered for you.—You
 only have to mourn for the loss of her ; but
 she might have mourned for you, for her-
 self, and for her off-spring.

Indeed,

Indeed, the loss of *this intellectual Being* might be accounted a misfortune almost at any rate, were *this sensible, warm motion to become a kneaded clod*; but we, who are taught such noble conceptions of the Author of nature, can never suppose that He will suffer even a temporary cessation of consciousness. — I cannot enter into those gloomy apprehensions, that when the immortal spirit has forsaken the body, its faculties shall for a time be chained down in a state of unconscious stupidity. Such an appointment would, in my opinion, both be inconsistent with the nature and properties of the soul, and contrary to the attributes of its benevolent Creator. To what various modes of being, inconceivable to us, may not omnipotence assign our departed spirits? What degrees of happiness may not he have in store adapted to intellectual existence? Concluding then that your virtuous Harriot is now in a state of superior bliss, how super-

fluous

fluious would it be to mourn on her account !
 Would you, were it in your power, recal
 her happy spirit to these regions of chance
 and vanity ? Would you with the liberal
 mind to leave its intellectual feast, and reani-
 mate a clod of earth ? Would you then con-
 fine its dilated powers in the prison of a mor-
 tal body, and subject it to all the pains of its
 miserable partner ? " No ; surely, no." I
 hear you say, " I will mourn no longer for
 my child."

Yet, possibly, you may mourn for yourself ;
 there is always something selfish in those sor-
 rows that seem to be the most social. It is
 hard, you will say, that you should lose the
 comfort of such a child in the decline of life.
 Her filial tenderness would have cheared the
 languor of age, and would have strewed its
 barren way with the flowers of youth. More-
 over, what joy must it have been to you to
 have

have seen your maternal cares successful in her growing virtues, and those virtues crowned with the happiness they deserved! This, Madam, you have lived to see. Believe it, your Harriot is now in possession of greater happiness than this world has to give. By her death you are no doubt deprived of many comforts, but may not these be more than made up to you by the pleasure of reflecting on that sublime felicity she now enjoys. Indulge that reflection, and how poor, how contemptible will every thing else appear upon comparison!

Were not these arguments sufficient to set your heart at ease, I might refer you to the universal law of nature, from whence there is no appeal. Have not death and ruin established their empire over all her works? Is not the history of every nation replete with their triumphs? Does not every place through
which

which you pass present you with the ruins of
 existence? Cease the mother's sighs a moment,
 and attend the general condition of nature:
 Cast your eye upon yon continent—there she
 sits bewailing the destruction of her sons;—
 there have perished, within these few years,
 more than two hundred thousand of the hu-
 man species by the devouring jaws of war.
 Shall we afflict ourselves for a private loss
 when the world is dying around us! Let us
 remember that we were born within the pre-
 cincts of death, and sacrifice to him without
 many tears.

I am persuaded, Madam, that *none of these*
things were hid from you; but it is possible
 that in the depth of your affliction you might
 not attend to them. Should I add more, I
 might seem to distrust your prudence; but
 had I said less, I should not have proportioned
 my arguments to the greatness of your grief.

Happy

Happy should I be if they could have the least weight with you!—If you would now convince the world that, as you are possessed of every other virtue, you are not wanting in fortitude!

In a world so entirely given up to dissipation of every kind, where amusements seem to be the principal object of life, and business itself to be pursued only as a necessary evil—a time when the hours of idleness seem to have expanded the fibres of imagination, and to have left nothing new under the sun, is it not strange that men having lived here in this maze of dissipation, possessed of health, talents, and fortune, a man may nevertheless be compelled to say, I have many things to do.

LET-

It is not at all like some things that I should be led into the train of thought by the happiness I lately enjoyed at D— If is certain, however, that those reflections and

LETTER II.

From Mr. *****

IN a world so entirely given up to dissipation of every kind, where amusement seems to be the principal business of life, and business itself to be pursued only as subservient to amusement—at a time when the labours of ingenuity seem to have exhausted the stores of imagination, and to have left nothing new under the sun, is it not strange that after having lived years in this maze of jocundity, possessed of health, spirits, and fortune, a man may nevertheless be compelled to say, *I have rarely known pleasure.*

It may at first sight seem strange that I should be led into this train of thought by the happiness I lately enjoyed at D——. It is certain, however, that these reflections,
and

and I cannot but think they are founded on truth and nature, were first suggested to me by that pleasing incident.

The amusements of life are numerous as the vices of the age, the pleasures few as the virtues. The reason is, the mind of man has something of Divinity in its nature. It fixes its eye at once upon the past, the present, and the future: It is ever comparing ideas: The object capable of giving it pleasure must be delightful, as any thing experience has yet tasted, equal to our previous expectations, and apparently productive of no evil consequence. Can any of the fashionable, and so much sought after amusements answer to this character? Wit and humour, wine and music, and all the apparatus of splendor and luxury will not, I fear, after an impartial examination, be found equal to any one part of it.

These

These may contribute to delight, but they are not alone capable of giving it.

The Platonic wise man, greatly despising these, seeks for pleasure in the schools of antiquity. He follows her through the fairy scenes of ancient poesy, enquires of the sages of old, sits down with Plato beneath his shade, and wanders up and down the porticos of Athens. At length, when he has wearied himself with laborious researches, he finds he expected more from science than it had to give, and that happiness is no more to be found in abundance of knowledge than wisdom in a multitude of words. After having spent the greatest part of life in the severe assiduities of study, he has the mortification to find that he is but a novice in science, that boundless fields of learning yet remain unexplored,

explored, and that he must at length quit the prospect, or perish in the search.

Various as the minds of men are, I am much mistaken if they are not all to be made happy the same way; otherwise I think they are not capable of happiness here at all. The variety of their inclinations reaches no farther than to dispose them to be variously amused.

The man whose heart is replete with pure and unaffected piety, who looks upon the Father of nature in that just and amiable light which all his works reflect upon him, cannot fail of tasting the sublimest pleasure, in contemplating the stupenduous and innumerable effects of infinite goodness. Whether he looks abroad on the natural or the moral world, his reflections must still be attended with delight; and the sense of his own unworthiness,

worthiness, so far from lessening, will increase his pleasure, while it places the forbearing kindness and indulgence of his Creator in a still more interesting point of view. Here his mind may dwell upon the present, look back to the past, or stretch forward into futurity with equal satisfaction; and, the more he indulges contemplation, the higher will his delight arise. Such a disposition as this seems to be the most secure foundation on which the fabric of pleasure can be built.

Next to the veneration of the supreme Being, the love of human kind seems to be the most promising source of pleasure. And it is a never-failing one to him who, possessed of this principle, enjoys also the power of indulging his benevolence: who makes the superiority of his fortune, his knowledge, or his power, subservient to the wants of his fellow creatures. It is true there are few
whose

whose power or fortune are so adequate to the wants of mankind, as to render them capable of performing acts of universal beneficence ; but a spirit of universal benevolence may be possessed by all ; and the bounteous Father of nature has not proportioned the pleasure to the greatness of the effect, but to the greatness of the cause.

The contemplation of the beauties of the universe, the cordial enjoyments of friendship, the tender delights of love, and the rational pleasures of religion are open to all ; and they are, all of them, in my opinion, capable of giving that real happiness I would contend for. These being the only fountains that I know of, from which true pleasure springs, it is no wonder that many should be compelled to say they have not yet found it, and should still cry out, "Who will shew us any good?" They seek it in every way, but the

true way. They want a heart for devotion, humanity, friendship and love, and a taste for what is truly beautiful and admirable.

Having thus supported my argument, it remains that I assure you, when I visited your *Valle of Silence*, I drank a larger draught of sincere delight than I have done for some time past. The various beauties of nature displayed around me, Love and Friendship by my side, the enlivening glass before me, good humour, not without wit, bearing company, and * Sweet smiling Innocence, crowning all with her approving nod, conspired to give me that genuine unmixed pleasure which is so often sought after, and so seldom found.

However, I flatter myself it will not be long before, by paying a welcome visit to my

~~you so well as I wish to do.~~

* The gentleman brought his wife with him.

noisy habitation, you will restore to me the best part of the pleasure I reflect upon; and though you cannot bring me the beauties of your situation in your pocket, yet you may bring such a lively and elegant description of them, that the copy may give us almost as much delight as the original.

LETTER III.

To the same.

YOU have my thanks for your very kind and very moral epistle. To be sure you descant on happiness extremely well, but you will pardon me though I should tell you that, like most other philosophers, you have mistaken the means of it. Divines and moralists, from Dan even to Beertheba, have rung changes on the words *virtue and happiness*, and *happiness and virtue*; but I shall soon shew you that these have no closer connexion than Castor and Pollux, who never appear together; and that happiness no more depends on virtue than a taylor on a lord, I suppose if I can bring a syllogism to prove this, you will be amply satisfied.—Here then, Sir, is my three-legged proof. Nothing

thing can be accounted an efficient cause unless it be infallibly and exclusively so—Virtue can not infallibly and exclusively produce happiness—*Ergo*, Virtue is not the efficient cause of it. Suppose a man endowed with as much firmness as Cato, as much benevolence as Titus, as much religion as Numa, and fortified with as much philosophy as Epictetus or Antoninus, this accomplished man, with a pain in his tooth or his toe, would be as miserable as you or I. Thus, you see, the most consummate virtue is by no means preventive of misery; but what will you say if I should go farther, and affirm that it is frequently the cause of it? No doubt but that fine sensibility, on which the moral and social virtues are founded, has a thousand avenues to pain. We feel it almost every day. Human life is so full of lamentable events that, either for ourselves or for our fellow-creatures,

we find continual subjects of mourning; and thus that benevolence, which is the very essence of virtue, contributes to make us wretched.

But all this, you will say, is contrary to the received and established maxims of philosophy; and where will it end? Have patience, my good friend: No philosopher ever demolished one system, but to build another in its place. I have proved, I think, pretty clearly, that happiness does not depend on virtue; I shall now shew you that it is the effect of two minor vices, viz. *Carelessness* and *Indolence*. These together imply a total indifference with regard to every thing—and now for something in defence of my system, by way of declamation.—What golden days must that man enjoy, whose life flows in one clear and even current!—over whole
 impassive

impassive head the shafts of Time and Fortune
fly harmless, and who never sigh'd for him-
self or for his neighbour!

I will close this heterodox epistle with a few
stanzas I lately address'd to an ingenious lady,
who favoured me with *an Elegy on the search of*
HAPPINESS.

To seek the lovely nymph you sing
I've wander'd many a weary mile,
From grove to grove, from spring to spring;
If here or there she deign'd to smile.

Nay, what I now must blush to say,
For sure it hap'd in evil hour;
I once so far mistook my way,
To seek her in the haunts of Power.

How should success my search betide,
When still so far I wander'd wrong?
For *Happiness* on *Arrowe's* side,
Was listening to *MARIA's* song.

Delighted

Delighted thus with you to stay,

What hope have I the nymph to see;

Unless you cease your magic lay,

Or bring her in your arms to me?

LET.

LETTER IV.

From the same.

THOUGH the intention of this letter is not to hold an argument concerning happiness, but to propose a scheme for actually promoting it, I cannot help setting myself down for a little while upon your logical stool, and though I am, as Horace says, or rather Lydia of Horace, *levis Cortice*, I am afraid it will be found of so feeble a structure that my little weight may crush it into pieces: Indeed, to say the truth, I cannot help thinking you have made it up of rotten materials, on purpose to have a little sport with me! In the first place if nothing can be accounted an efficient cause, unless it be infallibly and exclusively so, then there is no such thing as an efficient cause in nature; for every cause

we

we know of, has different effects, according to the different texture and disposition of the matter it works upon. Thus learning and religion make some people wise, others mad. In the next place you assert that virtue cannot infallibly produce happiness. This I shall readily grant, as it makes for me, and not against me: For I set out with observing that the pleasures of life, or those moments in which the mind is possessed of happiness, were few; but is Indolence then more capable of making us happy than Virtue? Yet, why do I argue seriously? It is an excellent joke for a man to take a great deal of pains to make another believe he is in love with Indolence. My dear friend, that will never do. But I have a request to make, which, if you deny me, will be a stronger proof of your indolence than all your logic. Next week I am to accompany two young ladies, one of whom is now at my house, to Abingdon, which

which is within five miles of Oxford, and famous in song for being the habitation of *the dainty widow*. If you will give us your company I will answer for your being as welcome to my brother's house as the good man was to the widow's. You will there also have an opportunity of seeing Oxford, *Urbem quam dicunt Romam, Melibæe*. Possibly your inclination to see Abingdon may be heightened by perusing the following lines, which were the sag end of a letter written long ago.

What joy,
 Along thy clear smooth surface, at decline
 Of sultry day, in shallow skiff to glide,
 O tuneful Isis ! by full many a bard
 In sweetest numbers sung. Not wanted there
 Fair females grac'd with every native charm
 Peculiar. Then, what glowing transports fire
 The love-expanded breast ! when from the lips
 Of rosy maids, as from its genuine fount,
 The dulcet voice of harmony ascends !
 Charm'd with the sounds, the odour-wasting
 breeze,

Officious,

Officious, bears them on its airy wing
Along the vocal shades that crown thy shore.

Dodonian *Newnham*, raptur'd, hears the song,
Though not surpriz'd; for, like the shades of
Jove,

The knotty bosom of each British oak
Is harmoniz'd and soften'd by some muse.
These joys I once have tasted—

And these joys I would have my friend go
and partake with me.

LET.

LETTER V.

To the same.

NEVER more will I look askew at a syllogism since your grave treatment of my last has afforded me such a meal of laughing. Spirits of *Smiglecius* and *Burgerdiscius*, rest peaceably in your respective allotments! No more shall the bramble and the bindweed be scattered on your graves; but flowers, spirits of logic, flowers shall fall upon you! and now, my good, dear friend, enjoy your system; for no longer will I dispute it with you.

But observe that, though I suffer you to remain in quiet possession of your opinion, I do not give up mine. I yet maintain that carelessness and indolence are harbingers of happiness; and do you think that, after this assertion,

assertion, I shall drag myself to Oxford in quest of it? In my present state of mind, I do not believe that the charms which drew Orpheus, Theseus, and many others to the infernal regions, could draw me five miles from —, and is it a likely thing then that a stage coach should draw me more than ten times five? Consider the dangers and inconveniences that await the traveller, and more particularly the unhappy man who travels in a stage-coach. He has not the least power either over his person, his time, or his purse. The two first are entirely at the mercy of the fellow who drives him, and the last is never out of the reach of the highwayman. You must rise at the coachman's hour; you must dine at the coachman's inn; you must go when the coachman pleases, and, when he pleases, stop. What man that loves his ease can bear such torments? To be roused from pleasing dreams or refreshing slumbers,

slumbers, by the hoarse voice of an ostler, calling out at your chamber door, "Vour o'Clock Zur," or to be run through the ear with the shriller cry of a chambermaid, who begins the day, as she ends it, with a lye, and tells you that the coach is at the door.— To swallow, for your breakfast, a muddy draught called coffee, perhaps the fourth or fifth edition of that *Stygian* liquor, which, after it had lost its virginity to my landlord, had been repeatedly served up to other travellers, before it came to you—when you arrive at the long expected dirty inn where you dine, to be fingered by the fat landlady, for she listeth not to go, into a room, "With mat half hung"—There to feast your eyes with the table set in order for dinner, covered with a cloth indeed, but such a one whose complexion shews that it has wiped the hands and mouth, and imbibed the drippings of many a traveller, before you approached it!

— These are evils which no Bard can bear.
 But I may add to these the many hair-breadth
 'scapes you have from the river accidentally
 swollen with rain, the shelving bank, and the
 sturdy waggon.

Before turnpikes were erected, it was no
 unusual thing for the traveller, ere he ven-
 tured on a long journey, to make his will.
 I see no reason why this custom should cease;
 and if you and your fair friends are determined
 to go, I would have you first settle your af-
 fairs. Please also to tell the ladies that, next
 to a place in their affections, I should be
 glad to find one in their wills.

You have my thanks for your good verses,
 and my prayers for your good journey. —

Sic Te Diva potens Cypri, &c. &c.

L E T T E R VI.

From the same.

THERE is an adage in our mother tongue (full of wisdom no doubt, because it is more ancient than our grannims) which says, *we ought to praise the bridge we pass over.* I often ponder upon adages. I keep a string of them in my pericranium ready for service whenever I travel, to amuse and instruct myself and my companions. When I set out on my late peregrination, I brushed them up, and begun to play them off at Hyde Park turnpike. The morning was fine. No cross accident had intervened, and my cares I had recommended to the western blast, parting with them, at the same time that I parted with my wife, at the famous White Horse in Piccadilly. O thou cruel monster!

D 2

I call-

I cannot pass thee without a becoming resentment. How often hast thou torn the tender infant from the arms of the weeping mother ! How often hast thou put those asunder whom heaven has joined, and caused eternal lovers to take a heart-breaking farewell ! Strange ! that thy skin should still remain so fair and inviting, and not be turned black with the enormity of thy crimes. Bucephalus is famed for having borne his master to victory and glory ; Pegasus for having transported my worthy friend and many other exalted Bards above these dusky regions ; but thou, O thou infamous White Horse ! like that which bore the destruction of Troy in its belly, art remarkable for nothing but being the cause of misery to parting friends and lovers !

Well, now we set forward, and jogged on very pleasantly till we arrived at that emporium of highwaymen, Hounslow-heath.

There

There I thought of your letter, and read it to the ladies, upon which they stuck close to me, and gave me the pleasure of comforting them. I remember to have read of an illustrious Roman who was censured for saying, before his daughter, that he was never so happy as when Jove thundered, because it made his wife cling to him. Certainly women's fears heighten their influence over us, and their dependence makes them the more amiable in our eyes, as it gives us occasion of enjoying our own importance. Every man I saw, I told the ladies, looked more like a thief than a horse, and even that, sometimes, had the desired effect.

By repeating proverbs, telling stories, reciting past events, and bestowing a great deal of wit upon a poor fellow who sat in one corner of the coach, and seemed to want it, we wore away the hours agreeably enough,

till we arrived at our dining-house ; where, to your eternal confusion, Sir, we were conducted into a magnificent parlour by a well-looking, well behaved landlady, who spread our table with clean linen and delicate viands ; and caused us to be attended by two rosy maidens. There, Sir, after an agreeable refreshment, came into my head the adage with which I began my letter. In consequence of this I determined to give a more faithful portrait of travel than you presented us with. And here it is, clothed in allegorical habit on purpose to wait upon you.

As INDUSTRY was going abroad early to his labour, and climbing, without impatience, a lofty mountain over which he was obliged to pass, he espied upon the summit a beautiful nymph employed in searching for uncommon flowers, and often viewing with great attention the wide extended scenes that were stretched

stretched around her. Her eyes were piercing as the beams of the evening star, with a certain twinkling wantonness in them that heightened the resemblance. Her features were irregular, yet not less pleasing than those of a more perfect beauty. She had a certain agreeable wildness in her air, dress, and countenance, and something so speakingly inquisitive in the latter, that almost every feature seemed to ask a question. Upon the approach of INDUSTRY she fell into immediate discourse with him, and asked him, almost in the same breath, who he was, where he lived, whither he was going, and what there was in the neighbourhood worth seeing. INDUSTRY, ever accustomed to make the best of his time, answered the last question first. He told her that there was nothing so well worth seeing as a beautiful pleasure-house in the adjacent wood, and offered to conduct her to it. The Nymph, whose name was

CURIOSITY, eagerly followed him, and by the numberless questions she put to him as they pass'd, discovered an insatiable thirst of knowledge. INDUSTRY, who liked the humour of the Nymph, fail'd not to make every possible advantage of this, and though she found herself deceived, in some points when she arriv'd at the wood, yet she was gratified in so many others that she could not help loving her deceiver, and yielding to every proposal of his that might tend to her information. In consequence of this conversation CURIOSITY was pregnant, and in due time she brought forth a son, who, by order of the Sylvan deities, was named TRAVEL. He was favoured by all the gods, and in his youth was frequently instructed by them in visions. When he grew up he discovered in his temper his mother's thirst of knowledge, and his father's activity. He never staid longer in any place, than, Bee-like, to collect

lect the sweets that he found there. PLEASURE and WISDOM were his companions, and his attendants were PLENTY and VARIETY. By observing the manners and customs of various nations, he became polite and unprejudiced; and by comparing their laws, and the various modes of worship and government, he learned to be just, politick, and to serve the gods acceptably. In a large city, where much was to be seen, he had recourse for accommodations to the house of a gentleman who was known to take a pleasure in entertaining travellers. The name of this person was IDLENESS. He was a corpulent good natured man. If he had but victuals and drink, and a companion to laugh away the hours, which were otherwise tedious to him, he was contented. He never interfered in the interest of others, nor felt the emotions either of friendship or enmity. He would not, on any account, go two furlongs from

from his own door, but used to say, Pleasure and Trouble were such inveterate enemies, that they could not possibly meet upon the same occasion. He was often afflicted with the gout or the hyp, but the first he combated with the bottle, and the latter with the bottle-companion. He was much entertained with the conversation of TRAVEL, and conceived a design to dissuade him from rambling any more that he might keep him with him.

“ My friend,” said IDLENESS, “ I am
 “ amazed at your strange disposition. Who,
 “ like you, would for ever wander about,
 “ in search of pleasure, and not stand still a
 “ moment to enjoy it? Why will you ex-
 “ pose yourself to perpetual dangers, and
 “ needless difficulties, and undergo abroad a
 “ thousand inconveniences which you would
 “ never meet with at home? Why should
 “ you, who are a free man, submit to the ar-
 “ bitrary government of a sea-captain, more
 “ boisterous

“ boisterous than the element on which he
 “ commands, or to the no less absolute sway
 “ of an itinerant coach-man!” “ Truce
 “ with your queries,” said Travel, “ till I
 “ have proposed an equal number, and then,
 “ if you please, we will balance the account.
 “ How can you waste your time, and impair
 “ your health by refusing to give your body
 “ and mind that due exercise nature so loudly
 “ calls for? How can you confine that ar-
 “ duous curiosity, implanted in the soul to
 “ urge you on to unbounded knowledge,
 “ within the narrow limits of one city or
 “ province? Are you really so destitute of
 “ courage as to be over-awed by visionary
 “ dangers, and trivial inconveniences?”
 Here ended the dispute; IDLENESS would
 not be at the pains to seek further arguments,
 nor, if he had, would Travel have staid to
 hear them.

L E T.

L E T T E R VII.

To the same.

I Admire your Manœuvres extremely. When you found yourself unequal to the combat in the open field, you had recourse to bush fighting, and skulked very opportunely behind proverbs and allegories. I am not accustomed to this Indian method of making war, and it is more than probable that, if I attacked you, I should meet with the fate of Braddock. I found a retreat.

Your apostrophe to the White Horse pleases me much, though I know not how to reconcile it to what you had just before been saying, viz. that you parted with your cares at the same time that you parted with your wife. Is it, said I, so painful a thing to part with

with care? If not, why this apostrophe to the White Horse?

I am extremely happy, my dear friend! I have lately met with two very valuable people in this neighbourhood. They can converse, Sir: They can actually converse on subjects of taste, and learning, and manners. Indeed you must allow me to mention it as something uncommon; for though I have been distinguished by the favour of many very good sort of folks in these parts, I have hitherto met with scarce any but these who were able to converse. People can talk here as well as in other places. I would not have you suppose that the fogs, which hover round us, obstruct the use of our lungs; but I really believe that they darken our brains, for we have no more taste than poor Parson *Clay*. My new friends, however, are by no means under these Batavian influences. You will

will be charmed to hear how wisely and how happily they live.

Mr. ***** is a great reader, and his lady is a lover of learning. History seems to be his favourite province, and while Mrs. — is employing herself, in the morning, upon the ingenious labours of her needle, Mr. — is informing her of the revolutions of empires, provinces and kingdoms. The afternoon is spent in conversation, gardening, walking, &c. unless a friend drop in, and discourse is then found to be a sufficient amusement.

While they are in the country, however, they neither receive nor pay many visits; the reason of which, no doubt, is that they find happiness enough at home. Mr. — is naturally of a serious cast, yet seems to enjoy any thing that has the appearance of wit

wit or humour. He rather chuses to follow than to take the lead in conversation, but what he advances on any argument is evidently the result of chastised opinion and deep knowledge. — Mrs. ——— is of a more sprightly turn, and has a ready command of ideas, with which I sometimes think that Mr. ——— is rather overstocked, so that, while several are crowding at the gate of expression, they hinder one another. Mr. ——— has a forcible plainness and an emphatical sincerity in his expression, which gives weight to it. Mrs. ——— has a soft, harmonious voice, and a lively benignity in her aspect, which insures the welcome of every thing she has to say. I am only displeased with her for discontinuing her music, for it seems she once practised it; and that discontinuance is the more strange as she seems to be a lover of that Divine art. I was delighted with her praises of my seraphic Handel—(May I not call him my Handel?)

del?) Speaking of his Oratorios, she prettily observed, *If mortals can find out such entertainments, how exquisite must be the delights of superior Beings?*

LET-
I was delighted with her praises of my friend Handel—(May I not call him my friend?)
as she seems to be a lover of that Divine art.
and that disengagement is the more striking
for it needs the once practised it;
I am only delighted with her for disclaiming
the welcome of every thing she has to say.
a lively readiness to get along, which induces
her—has a full, harmonious voice, and
his expression, which gives weight to it.
of plaints and an emphatical sincerity in
another one another. — has a force
are crowding at the gate of expression, they
is rather overlooked, so that while several
which I sometimes think that Mr. —
and his ready command of ideas, with
led. — Mr. — is of a more brightly
the realm of chaffed opinion and deep

L E T T E R VIII.

To Mr. *****

On the Study of Poetry.

TH E R E are not many modern productions that I read a second time, therefore you may take it as a compliment, that I have lately re-perused your Elegy. However, without a compliment, I assure you that I read it again with repeated pleasure. What my ingenious friend and countryman, Dr. Burn, once said of some juvenile pieces of a friend of yours, I may apply with greater propriety to your verses, viz. that *they display a very rich vein of poetry which Time will ripen and bring to perfection.* The art of poetry is, like every other art, progressive; and excellence must always be the effect of time.

Mr. Pope says, that a man must be born to judge as well as to write; but it is certain that no man is born with perfect principles of judgment, for these can only be collected from comparative observation, and comparative observation must be a work of time. In like manner, the faculty of imagination, or what we call genius, is gradually ripened and matured. The mind collects her treasures progressively, and borrows her ideas of harmony, beauty and sublimity from her acquaintance with the works of nature. Possibly the judgment may continue to be improved through the whole progress of life, because the power of comparative observation will always remain perfect, but I believe there is a period beyond which genius rather decays than improves; and it is then probably at the best when the mind has been enriched by long observation, and the faculties of the body have felt no sensible decay.

II I know

I know you have acquired a justness of taste very uncommon at your early time of life; and when I have observed you write a stanza, and tear your paper three or four times, I have told you that your judgment was too ripe for your imagination. This I told you, that you might not be discouraged by the seeming labour or penury of thought; and I have now put you in mind that the faculty of imagination is progressive, lest, when your severe judgment compares your own performances with the productions of mature genius, you should sit down in despair.

There is an instance within your own knowledge, of a gentleman who has acquired a considerable reputation in the poetical world, but who, nevertheless, when he was young, and resident at your university, published a volume of poems in which there are very few things tolerable.

E

Need

Need I tell you for your encouragement, that you are of a poetical family? A gentleman of your name, an Oxford man too, who was contemporary with Andrew Marvel, and not unlike him in the spirit of his writings, published several dramatic pieces and other poems, some of which (particularly the complaint of the deserted Ariadne) are very pretty. His book, I remember, is preceded by almost an hundred recommendatory poems, according to the custom of those times—many of which were written by heads of houses and senior fellows.—What do you think of that, Sir? But the best of those prefatory poems is the last, written by the bookseller, which ends thus,

Six hundred pages of good wit; read, try it.

Would all that cannot mend this book may
buy it!

If this scrawl prevails upon you to invoke the Muse, you shall hear further from me on the study of poetry.

LET-

LETTER IX.

To the same.

The Subject continued.

TO tell you, as I did in my last, that the imagination as well as the judgment is progressive, might be an antidote against poetical despair; but I suppose you will not think yourself much obliged to me, unless I inform you how the progress of both may be assisted.

Poetical imagination must be improved by the acquisition of poetical ideas, and these ideas must be borrowed from all the visible works of nature. A poet should not sit down satisfied with superficial knowledge or cursory observation; he must enquire into the minute dependencies and the fine combinations

of the universal system. By tracing the sublime and harmonious operations of nature, he will unavoidably collect ideas of sublimity and harmony, and by beholding the elegant simplicity of her works, he will learn to transcribe it in his own.

But a knowledge of the external works of nature, is not enough for a poet: He must be well versed in that kind of learning which is scholastically denominated metaphysics. If he were not acquainted with the intellectual powers; if he understood nothing of the various modes of ideal perception; were he a stranger to the different movements of the heart, the causes, the progress and effects of simple and complicated passions, his poetical powers would be confined within the narrow province of external description; and he would never attain the noblest end of poetry, the power of addressing himself to the heart.

This moral knowlege is to be acquired only by an attentive observation of the human mind, and a comparative view of the diversity of characters.

It is by no means sufficient to obtain the elements alone either of moral or natural knowlege. A poet should examine distinctly, the minutest relations and resemblances of the rational, the animal, the vegetable and inanimate creation ; for hence arise all the beauties of comparative imagery. Had Shakespear been unacquainted with the quickness of animal sensation in the minutest creatures, how could it have entered into his imagination to say so beautifully and pathetically,

— The poor beetle that we tread upon,
In corporal sufferance feels a pang as great
As when a giant dies.

Had he been deficient in the *minutiae* of physical knowledge, could he have thought of the following striking argument against self-love?

————— Thou'rt not thy self,
For thou exist'st on many a thousand grains
That issue out of dust —————.

Had he been a superficial observer of human nature, could he have added to the above argument, this just reflection on the misery of life?

————— Happy thou art not,
For what thou hast not, still thou striv'st to
get,

And what thou hast forget'st. —————

When a competent stock of moral and natural knowledge is acquired, and the mind is so well furnished with ideas, that the imagination rather seems to riot than to languish over her intellectual feast, may we not then

catch

catch the reed and call the muse? No: something more may yet be wanting, and that something I can find no better name for than *Enthusiasm*. Yes, Sir, you must be an enthusiast before you can be a poet. But then, how is this to be obtained? That we must make our question. There is such a thing as acquiring a religious *Enthusiasm*; and, if so, why may not a poetical *Furor* also be acquired? Provided the principles thereof are connate with the mind, there are means, I believe, of actuating and awakening them. But let no bold man suppose that this divine *Afflatus* can be procured by artificial means alone; it is only when the seeds of it are inherent in nature that those means can be of any use. Supposing then, my friend, for I cannot doubt it, that Melpomene smiled upon your birth; or in other words, supposing that nature formed your mind to be smitten with the love of herself, you are then possessed of
those

those original principles which art may call forth, and awaken into action.

One method of kindling poetical as well as religious enthusiasm, is to read those writings that are most impregnated with it: such, in the Greek, are the works of Moschus, Tyrtaeus, Æschylus, Pindar, and some pastoral pieces of Theocritus: to these may be added all the writings of Plato. In the Latin, I would recommend Virgil, Tibullus, Lucan, several of the odes of Horace, and some of the metamorphoses of Ovid. The warmest of the Italian writers are Petrarch, Tasso and Ariosto. Almost all the enthusiasm of France has been lavished on Gresset. Germany has of late astonished the world with a true born bard in Gessner, and you may catch some enthusiasm from his writings, even from our translations. The poets of our own country that were nursed in the lap of nature, and caught the true inspiring

ring breath, were Spencer, Shakespear; Milton and Thomson. We have had several admired poets beside these, but not of the class I am speaking of. In this class, however, I could rank some living names; but as you know my favourite authors, I have no occasion to mention them here.

A reader, possessed of the genuine principles of poetry, cannot fail of catching from these authors that inspiration with which they wrote. More particularly in their descriptions of nature, rural imagery, pictures of private virtue and pastoral innocence, there is an enchantment irresistible. What poet can read the following passages in Virgil's Georgicks, and Thomson's Seasons, without being transported to the very places they describe, and feeling the enthusiasm from which they flowed!

Flumina

Flumina amem sylvasque inglorius! Oubi campi.
Sperchiusque, et virginibus bacchata lacænis
Taygeta! O qui me gelidis in montibus Hæmi
Sistat, et ingenti ramorum protegat umbra?

G. II. v. 486.

Sed me Parnassi deserta per ardua dulcis
Raptat amor: juvat ire jugis, qua nulla priorum
Castaliam molli divertitur orbita clivo.

G. III. v. 291.

Et juvat undantem buxo spectare cytorum,
Naryciæque picis lucos: juvat arva videre,
Non rastris hominum, NON ULLI OBNOXIA CURÆ.

G. II. v. 437.

Thrice happy he! who, on the sunless side
Of a romantic mountain, forest-crown'd,
Beneath the whole collected shade reclines,
Or in the gelid caverns, woodbine-wrought;
And fresh-bedew'd with ever-spouting streams,
Sits coolly calm!

Summer.

Welcome, ye shades! ye bowery thickets, hail!
Ye lofty pines! ye venerable oaks!
Ye ashes wild resounding o'er the steep!
Delicious is your shelter to the soul.

Summer.

Seek

— Seek the bank where flowering elders crowd,
 Where scatter'd wild the lily of the vale
 Its balmy essence breathes, where cowslips hang
 The dewy head, where purple violets lurk,
 With all the lowly children of the shade :
 Or lie reclin'd beneath yon spreading ash,
 Hung o'er the steep ; —————
 There let the classic page thy fancy lead
 Thro' rural scenes, such as the *Mantuan* swain
 Paints in the matchless harmony of song.
 Or catch thyself the landskip gliding swift
 Athwart Imagination's vivid eye. *Spring.*

The same poetical infection may be caught
 from the Lyric muse, when, with all her na-
 tive wildness and freedom, she thus sweetly
 warbles :

Once when by Trent's pellucid streams,
 In days of prattling infancy,
 Led by young wondering extasy,
 To view the sun's refulgent beams,
 As on the sportive waves they play'd,
 Too far I negligently stray'd,
 The God of day his lamp withdrew,
 Evening her dusky mantle spread,
 And from her moisten'd tresses shed
 Refreshing drops of pearly dew.

Close

Close by the borders of a wood,
 Where an old ruin'd abbey stood,
 Far from a fondling mother's sight,
 With toil of childish sport oppress'd
 My tender limbs sunk down to rest,
 'Midst the dark horrors of the night.
 As Horace erst by fabled doves
 With Spring's first leaves was mantled o'er,
 A like regard the British loves
 To me their future poet bore ;
 Nor left me guardianless alone,
 For tho' no Nymph nor Faun appear'd,
 Nor piping Satyr was there heard,
 And here the Dryads are unknown,
 Yet natives true of English ground,
 Sweet elves and fays in mantles green,
 By Shepherds oft in moonlight seen
 And dapper Fairies danc'd around.
 The nightingale her love-lorn lay
 Neglecting on the neighbouring spray,
 Strew'd with fresh flowers my turfy bed ;
 And, at the first approach of morn,
 The redbreast stript the fragrant thorn,
 On roses wild to lay my head.
 Thus, as the wondering rustics say,
 In smiling sleep they found me laid

Beneath

Beneath a blossom'd hawthorn's shade;
 While sportive bees in mystic play,
 With honey fill'd my little lips
 Blent with each sweet that Zephyr sips
 From flowery cups in balmy May.

Epistles of Aristippus.

Sortez du sein des violettes,
 Croissez feuillages fortunés,
 Couronnez ces belles retraites,
 Ces detours, ces routes secrètes
 Aux plus doux accords destinés !

Ma muse pour vous attendrie
 D'une charmante rêverie

Subit déjà l'amiable loi ;

Les bois, les valons, les montagnes,
 Toute la scène de campagnes

Prend une ame & s'orne pour moi.

Aux yeux de l'ignare vulgaire,

Tout est mort, tout est solitaire ;

Un bois n'est q'un sombre réduit,

Un ruisseau n'est q'une onde claire,

Les Zephirs ne sont que du bruit :

Aux yeux que Calliope éclaire,

Tout brille, tout pense, tout vit.

Gresset.

From

From the last quoted author I might draw many other beautiful passages, pregnant with the same genuine spirit of enthusiasm, were not these sufficient to inform you what kind of poetry it is from which you are most likely to catch the *inspiring breath*.

But reading of poetry is not the only means by which poetical imagination may be assisted and poetical enthusiasm awakened, for as the former must be enriched with the knowledge of nature, so the latter must be inflamed by her love. From this passion the true poet derives those ineffable sensations that inspire all his works, and place them so far above the strain of vulgar compositions. With the inquisitive eye of love he searches out all her beauties, and expatiates on them with the raptures which that passion inspires. The question then is, by what means may this love of nature most effectually be excited?

And,

And, I answer, by frequent conversation with her; or, in sacred words, *by beholding her fair beauty, and visiting her temple*. That admirable wisdom which is visible in all her operations, the exquisite symmetry and proportion of her living works, and the simple beauty wherewith she has adorned the inanimate creation, inspire the contemplative mind with a kind of religious veneration, and refined affection. Happy enthusiasm! innocent idolatry! This love of nature, my friend, was that *Egeria* whom the Roman Lawgiver met in the grove, and is that truly inspiring muse, without whose favour no poet can live. It is this that makes the true poet so fond of retirement. He wants to be alone with his mistress, and to enjoy her charms in the quiet of rural solitude. *O Rus quando Te aspiciam?* is the language of every genuine son of Phœbus, whose natural sentiments have not been extinguished in the pursuit of popular glory. That philosophical

study of nature, which I before recommended as necessary for the information of the mind, may be of great use also to make the poet enamoured of those beauties he explores. Who is more likely to become the lover of nature than the philosopher who employs himself in the contemplation of her works? Hence, though poetry is not always the concomitant of philosophy, there having been good philosophers who were not poets, she can by no means dispense with the assistance of her sister science. Philosophy must be her instructress.

Tutor'd by her, hence Poetry exalts

Her voice to ages, and informs the page

With music, image, sentiment and thought

Never to die. _____ *Summer.*

There is one means of kindling the flame of poetical enthusiasm beside those I have mentioned, but it is a dangerous means, and I would not hastily recommend it to you;
parti-

particularly when I recollect what one of your own prophets has spoken,

And let th' aspiring youth beware of love;

Of the smooth glance beware, the kindling
grace,

Th' enticing smile, the modest-seeming eye,

Beneath whose beauteous beams, belying hea-
ven,

Lurk searchless cunning, cruelty and death.

Spring.

But if you should be hardy enough to risque these dangers, I will venture to assure you, that by means of this passion you will find your poetical enthusiasm greatly heightened. Could you reverse the method of religious enthusiasts, who sometimes make a quick transition from the love of God to the love of the creature, and remove your passion from a mortal mistress to an immortal muse, it would be better still. However I will not assert that this is practicable.

After all this has been advanced with respect to the assistance of poetic imagination and enthusiasm, one thing must be repeated, that, where nature has not tuned the ear to harmony, and sown the seeds of that enthusiasm in the mind, every means will be vain.

I have promised you some hints for improving your judgment in poetry, but you see here is no room for them.

LET-

L E T T E R X.

To the same.

The Subject continued.

I Have before had occasion to take notice that judgment in poetry is improved by comparative observation. The mind borrows its idea of mechanic excellence from beholding different objects, and comparing them with each other. It is by this comparison that all defects are found, for had there been no different mode of beauty, there would have been no such thing as deformity. I will not assert that there are no innate ideas of excellence; but if there be such ideas, they are of little use, for we find that every art and science is extremely slow in its progress to perfection; the fine arts more particularly.

Every succeeding artist, if not altogether destitute of genius, adds something to the model upon which he forms himself; thus perfection is attained by gradual improvement. Whether our poetry has not for some time been at its highest perfection, I shall not take upon me to determine, but I will venture to say, that, for a century past, it has received no improvement; for Milton's *Comus* is, beyond all comparison, the finest poem in the English language. That different kinds of rhyming versification have been improved, I will allow; but those, simply considered, do not come under the denomination of poetry; a witty and harmonious combination of words alone, can no more make a fine poem, than a judicious mixture of colours can be termed an elegant painting. Yet, therefore, I maintain that *Comus* is the best poem in our language, and still shall continue so to do, till I find one superior to it in those great

2

essen-

essentials of poetry, imagery and enthusiasm. This then, my friend, I would recommend to you as the model by which you should form your judgment——

—— Be this your study and delight,
Read it by day, and meditate by night.

In short, never leave it till you have imbibed the very spirit and soul of it. By making this piece familiar to you, your judgment in that species of poetry will receive all the information that is requisite.

The province of poetic judgment is twofold, verbal and sentimental.

In the verbal province is included whatever relates to the management of words, their arrangement and combination, their propriety or impropriety, the harmony or dissonance, the force or weakness, the melody or asperity of versification.

With respect to the arrangement of words, that is undoubtedly the best which is the most easy and obvious. Though poetry will admit of more transpositions, and will bear them better than prose, yet they ought rarely to be admitted: particularly in descriptive and didactic poetry, and those other species that are characterized by ease, they should be very sparingly used. Notwithstanding they may sometimes be allowed for the greater energy of expression.

“ Follows the loosen’d, aggravated roar.”

“ Insequitur clamorque virum, stridorque rudentum.”

But where this disposition of words is not necessary to give greater force or weight to the line, it becomes stiff and awkward, as in the following instance:

Here pastures, rocks, wild wastes and wandering
rills,

There spiry forests, groves, and sun-climb’d hills,

Alter-

Alternate gives the varied prospect round.

Parentheses too long, or too frequently admitted, always destroy the ease and beauty of order in poetry, whatever they may do in prose; and they are utterly insufferable when they are introduced only as a comment on the text. Observe this effect in the following passage:

And toil we still for sublunary pay?
 Defy the dangers of the field, and flood,
 Or, spider like, spin out our precious all,
 Our more than vitals spin (if no regard
 To great futurity) in curious webs
 Of subtle thought, and exquisite design;
 (Fine net-work of the brain!) to catch a fly?
 The momentary buz of vain renown!

The above quotation puts me in mind of another fault not uncommon with many poets, but most egregious in the author of the *Night-Thoughts*; and that I can find no better

better name for than word-chacing. Sometimes a word is pursued through the whole chain of its relations and connections, and as every different link has a chain depending from it, so each is traced down to its extremity, till the simple original idea fares like a grain of mustard-seed, that shoots up and branches into an enormous tree. But it is the fate of the ideal tree to bear a load of useless boughs, that like so many idle suckers dry up the vital pith of sense.

It is worth while to observe this method of word-chacing or word spinning in the passage above quoted. The word *toil* in the first line, would certainly have been followed by *spin* in the next, had not the word *pay*, at the end of the line, introduced a military idea, and suggested *the dangers of the field and flood*. In the next line, however, the spinning begins,

Or,

Or, spider like, spin out our precious all,

It was impossible to mention the words *spin out*, without thinking of vitals—so it proceeds,

Our more than vitals spin.—

Then comes the explanatory *Parenthesis*, after which the spinning goes on,

_____ in curious webs

Of subtile thought, and exquisite design ;

(Fine net-work of the brain !)

The word *curious* was naturally followed by *subtile* and *exquisite*. *Webs* put the author in mind of *net-work*, and *net-work* was unalienable from the *brain*. But then what follows ?

_____ To catch a fly ?

The momentary *buzz* of vain renown !

It was the proper business of the web and the net-work to catch the fly—but here, unfortunately, the fly put the poet in mind of buzzing,

buzzing, and what was a *Fly* in one line, becomes a *Bzz* in the next. This might, however, be an involuntary fault. The author had spun his metaphor so far that he knew not any other way to draw, in the conclusion, its resemblance to the pursuits of men. A fly suggested the idea of *buzzing*, and *buzzing* was something like the voice of fame.

An ill-placed and injudicious repetition of the same words ought as much to be avoided as chasing and catching at their relatives and associates.

Touch'd by the cross, we live ; or, more than
die ;

That *touch* which *touch'd* not angels ; more di-
vine

Than that which *touch'd* confusion into form,
And darkness into glory, partial *Touch* !

Night-Thoughts.

Yet

Yet repetition, when judiciously used, is frequently pleasing and beautiful.

By foreign hands thy dying eyes were clos'd :

By foreign hands thy decent limbs compos'd :

By foreign hands thy humble grave adorn'd :

By strangers honour'd, and by strangers mourn'd.

Here the repetition is continued no farther than it ought to have been, and is judiciously changed in the last line. The pleasure this figure affords in poetry springs evidently from the same cause with that which the recitative gives us in music; but no rules can be laid down for the management of it, which must be entirely regulated by the ear.

Observe, however, that it is not confined to one, or two, or three words only. Sometimes a couplet, or even a whole stanza may be happily repeated. I do not here speak of those repetitions which are called the burthen

of

of the song, but might more properly be termed a burthen to the song: For the illustration of what I mean, let the following passage suffice, which I give you not in preference to any other, but because I can write it from memory, without the trouble of referring to books.

Illusions dear, adieu! no more
 Shall I your fairy haunts explore,
*Since Hope withholds her golden ray,
 And Fancy's colours faint away.*
 To Eden's shores, to Enon's groves,
 Resounding once with Delia's loves,
 Adieu! that name shall sound no more
 O'er Enon's groves, or Eden's shore.
*For Hope withholds her golden ray,
 And Fancy's colours faint away.*

Repetition is sometimes used to express fondness, sometimes scorn, and sometimes to enforce the belief of what appears scarcely credible. In the last instance it is used,
 though

though with a mixture of disdain, very happily by Catullus :

Coeli, Lesbia nostra, Lesbia illa,

Ille Lesbia, quam Catullus unam

Plus quam se, atque suos amavit omnes,

Nunc in quadris, et angipors, &c.

At Coelium, de Lesbia. Carm. 38.

Chapelle seems to have shut his eyes against this egregious beauty, when he could thus feebly translate the passage,

Qui l'eust ouï, mon cher Coelius,

Cette ingrate & fiere Lesbie,

Que j'amois autant que ma vie,

Oubliant son orgueil à Rome & ses vertus,

Des chevaliers Romains brigue la connoissance.

After such a translation, I may venture to subjoin the following.

Lesbia, the same, the very same,

Lesbia, my dear, my ancient flame,

Lesbia, on whom I doated more ———

Alas !—my friend—she's turn'd a whore !

If

If these translations do not place in a stronger light the beauty of the repetition in the original, they are from the purpose : however, you will pardon them.

Sometimes a word is repeated for the enlargement of the idea it is intended to convey, when it admits of no comparative increment :

And time wastes wearily the *dull, dull* day.

The use of repetition in moral and didactic poetry is to fix some important precept in the memory.

“ Whatever is, is right.”

After such a translation, I may venture to repeat the following.

I bid, the late, the very late
I bid, my dear, my sweetest friend
I bid, on whom I doted more
I bid, my friend—my friend—my friend!

LETTER XI.

To the same.

The Subject continued.

THE great business of judgment in the verbal province, is *properly to adapt the expression to the sentiment*. In this article there are a thousand avenues to impropriety and absurdity. It is natural for indifferent poets (indifferent writers that would be thought poets) to emblazon their pages with glowing expression, and to hide with pompous diction their poverty of sentiment; on the other hand the best poets are sometimes so secure under the force and beauty, the elegance or novelty of their thoughts, that they heedlessly suffer the expression to fall below and disgrace

VOL. II. G them.

them. This will appear from the following passage, . . .

— More true joy Marcellus exil'd feels
Than Cæsar, with a Senate at his heels.

Essay on Man.

It is, however, a much more common fault to raise the expression above the sentiment than to let it sink below it. What can be more ridiculous than the following description of a shell-fish left by the tide?

— Torn from its green domain,
The small inhabitant of scaly walls,
Rides on the rough back of the ragged wave,
And roll'd precipitate upon the shore,
Lies unrevolv'd by motion.

Anon.

Thus the milkmaid brushes thro' the dews
In a morning.

— The roseate Nymph
That draws the tepid nectar from the teat,
With

With the fair border of her downward vest
Deterfive, robs the flowers of orient pearl.

Ibid.

Frosty weather will benumb a girl's fingers,
and make her nose red :

———— nitrous piercing frost !

Whose chains coerce the quick muscles bind,
And tinge with crimson the projecting grace
Of Sylvia's aspect ! ——— *Ibid.*

The great cause of these absurd descriptions is the admitting of low and mean images, or objects, into a species of poetry which is naturally above them. The colouring must necessarily be consistent, and when the image is low or trivial it is heightened up to the rest by pompous expression.

Words have their different degrees of dignity as well as things, and it is the property of true criticism to suit them to the objects they express. Familiar ideas must be conveyed

by familiar phrases; and when great sentiments are to be expressed, the language must be raised in proportion. The utmost care should be taken that the expression neither rise above, nor fall below the subject. In either case it will be ridiculous, and inadequate in both. The sentiment will fare like a person who is either too highly or too slightly spoken of, and who must of consequence either disappoint expectation, or suffer unmerited censure.

But, methinks, you call upon me to direct you how to keep the due, but difficult, medium. In this case I would advise you in general, *to aim at simplicity.*

When we seek for words to express our ideas, we are inclined to chuse the most glowing and high-coloured, and, if any thing else contributes to determine our choice, it is
novelty;

novelty; but we are misled by false judgment in both these cases. In the first, we judge as children do of paintings, and place the merit of the picture in the flame of colouring; and in the latter, we conclude that the novelty of the words we make use of will be communicated to the sentiment: but in this case, as well as in the other, how much are we mistaken! Our thoughts may derive a quaintness, an air of novelty from being expressed in an uncommon combination of words; but from that alone they can never acquire originality.

To paint from nature, we must aim at simplicity. There is a native beauty in all her objects, which wants only to be exhibited in the simplest manner to please. Secure in her own charms, and independent of the adscititious ornaments of art, she appears most to advantage when her attributes are not

over-heightened. To express myself in the words of an ingenious lady,

“ Enough, the Muse her wreath of ivy twines,
 “ Mixt with each smiling field-flower’s fragrant
 “ bloom !”

Amongst the ancients, Theocritus and Tibullus are the purest models of simplicity. The graceful plainness of nature is happily imitated in all the rural images of the former. With what charming ease does he sit and sing !

Αἰθ' ἐπ' ἐμῶν ζώοις ἐναριθμῶ ὠφέλις ἡμεῖς,
 Ὡς τοὶ ἐγὼν ἐνομεύον ἀν' ὄρεα ἰᾶς καλὰς αἰγᾶς,
 Φώτας ἐισαΐων· τὺ ὑπὸ δρυὶν, ἢ ὑπὸ πικύαις
 Ἀδὺ μιλισδομῶ καλακεκλίσσῃ, θύει Κομάλα.

Idyl. VII. v. 86. &c.

Ah shepherd ! wert thou numbered with the
 living,
 Thy bonny * she-goats on the mountain’s side

* This word is most expressive of the Greek καλῶ.

Full gladly would I feed; whilst thou, dear
swain,

Shouldst take thy sweet pipe, and, beneath
the pines,

Or spreading oaks, make melody for me.

Tibullus was also happy in his expression of
nature; his language is beautifully simple,
neither too low nor too ornate.

Ipse seram teneras maturo tempore vites

Rusticus, et facili grandia poma manu.

Nec tamen interdum pudeat tenuisse bidentem,

Aut stimulo tardos increpuisse boves.

Non agnamve sinu pigeat, fetumve capellæ

Desertum obrita matre referre domum.

Tib. Lib. I. El. 1.

With timely care I'll sow my little field,

And plant my orchard with its master's hand,

Nor blush to spread the hay, the hook to wield,

Or range the sheaves along the sunny land.

For her I'll yoke my oxen to the plow,
 In gloomy forests tend my lonely flock ;
 For her, a goat-herd, climb the mountain's brow,
 And sleep extended on the naked rock.

If late at dusk, while carelessly I roam,
 I meet a strolling kid, or bleating lamb,
 Under my arm I'll bring the wanderer home,
 And not a little chide its thoughtless dam.

Hammond.

Hammond, who, as you have rightly observed, borrowed the chief beauties in his *Elegies* from Tibullus, seems to have been apprized that the principal excellence of his author was the graceful simplicity of his style: and indeed the English poet has very happily availed himself of his model. The Roman bard has in every instance shewn his fondness for the elegant plainness of nature; he could not even bear to meet his mistress in a full dress:

*Tunc mihi, qualis eris, longos turbata capillos,
 Obvia nudato Delia curre pede.*

LET,

LETTER XII.

To the same.

The Subject continued.

CAREFUL, indeed, you must be, that your expression neither rise above nor fall below the sentiment; but that will not be enough. Let it be your care likewise, to express neither too little nor too much. Scarce any fault is so common in poetry as the *pleonasm*.

There are two kinds of redundances, verbal and sentimental; but, as I have not yet done with the province of words, I shall at present consider only verbal redundances.

This

This fault, upon the least attention, is so extremely obvious that you might very well dispense with my adverting to it at all. But what shall we think when we find the best poets so frequently chargeable with it? The most correct writers in our own and in every other language are full of redundances, of words that serve no other purpose than that of filling the measure of the verse.

We need not go out of our way to seek for instances. Thus in Pope,

High heaven the *footstool* of his *seat* he makes.

ll. B. VIII.

Lost in the near *effulgence* of thy blaze.

Thomson's *Summer*.

— inform'd the heart
Of innocence, and *undissembling* truth.

Ibid.

—creative

creative love
Still bade eternal Eden smile around,

Ibid.

At once the chaser; and at once the prey.

Pope.

When frosts have whiten'd all the *naked* groves,
Where doves in flocks the *leafless* trees o'er-
shade.

Ibid.

songs and rhymes

Prevail as much in these *hard* iron times, &c.

Dryden.

To multiply instances of this kind would be invidious and unnecessary. The above-quoted are sufficient to justify my observation, and they are taken from respectable writers to convince you how very necessary it is to guard against them.

In descriptive poetry it is most difficult to keep clear of superfluities. When the me-
mory

memory ranges through the wilderness of words, we are not always contented with what is sufficient to express our sentiments, but are tempted to indulge in superfluous diction, by the fascinating charms of novelty or harmony.

—— In swelling epithets, thick-laid
As varnish on a harlot's cheek, the rest
Thin-sown with aught of profit or delight.

Milton.

In youth particularly, when the reins are thrown upon the neck of Fancy, our poetical productions are always filled with a profusion and superfluity of expression. It is then we are most apt to judge of poetry, as children judge of pictures, and to place its principal excellence in richness of drapery and height of colouring. By giving way to the luxury of words, we lose all precision, and become unavoidably inaccurate and redundant.

That

That your writings may for ever be exempt from this fault, let me again advise you to aim at simplicity. Be jealous of those words that solicit admission merely on account of their splendor. Let no epithet have place because it is tuneful or well drest, if it has otherwise no right to appear.

LET.

L E T T E R XIII.

To the same.

The Subject continued.

SOMETHING must be said on the Harmony of Numbers. But, where so much depends upon the ear, you must expect that I should make observations rather than lay down rules. At the same time you will consider that those very observations, must be agreeable to the decision of my own ear, and therefore you may give them what credit you please.

I think it is agreed by all, who have any pretence to a superior judgment in poetry, that blank verse is capable of the greatest, the most powerful and the most various harmony.

mony. The flow of numbers is not restrained by the necessity of a cadence at the end of the verse, which is frequently indispensable in the Couplet-measure: The harmony extends unbroken thro' an arbitrary number of lines, and falls or rises with the subject without suppression or restraint.

Boldly assault the Necromancer's hall, ||

Where if he be, || with dauntless hardihood,

And brandish'd blade, rush on him, || break his
glass, ||

And shed the luscious liquor on the ground.

It would have been impossible for the numbers of the couplet to have expressed the above action with like imitative force. Methinks a modern rhymers would have turned it thus,

Rise, and assault the Necromancer's hall,

If there the juggler be, secure his fall.

Proceed with brandish'd blade, and break his
glass,

And pour the liquor, on the verdant grass,

It

It is not only the misfortune of rhyme to call for superfluous epithets, and unessential images, but that eternal monotony to which the couplet measure is liable, must be tiresome to every judicious ear.

It is something like the ringing of five bells in a country steeple, that repeat their ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, with the same cadence for an hour together.

Let us read a passage taken from the Prince of Rhymers, and on a subject too that should have been distinguished by variety of numbers, had the couplet been capable of variety.

Tis not enough || no harshness gives offence ;
 The sound must seem || an echo to the sense ; ||
 Soft is the strain || when Zephir gently blows,
 And the smooth stream || in smoother numbers
 flows : ||

But when loud surges || lash the sounding shore,
 The hoarse rough verse || should like the torrent
 roar : ||

When

When Ajax strives || some rock's vast weight
to throw,

The line too labours || and the words move
flow. ||

What a painful monotony is produced in the above verses, (where the harmony should have been as much as possible diversified) by the regular pause in the middle of each line, and the cadence at the end of each Couplet !

I am much mistaken if blank verse would not have given greater scope to imitation on such a subject. Let us try.

Tis not enough the tuneful verse avoids
Hard-grating harshness ; echo to the sense,
The sound should seem to echo. Sighs the
breeze

Melodious ! softly flow the liquid lay.

Slide the smooth music like the glassy wave,

Not so, when rolls the wild flood, surge on
surge,

Voluminous; the high foam to the beach,
 Dashing, yielding, then dashing—thro' the
 verse

Thundering impetuous bursts the big-swollen
 tide.

To heave some rock's vast weight strains the
 firm arm?

Slow move the words oppress'd, and the verse
 strains.

But it is not my design at present to dwell
 upon superior advantages of blank verse in
 point of harmony. I would enquire by what
 means the numbers in every species of versifica-
 tion may be rendered most harmonious.

To begin with blank verse.

It is a bad compliment indeed, to heroic
 rhyme, to say, that blank verse in its flow
 and structure should be as unlike it as possible.
 But it is certainly true. The nearer resem-
 blance the structure of blank verse bears to
 that

that of the Couplet, the less harmonious it will be found,

O He is good, He is immensely good !

Who all things form'd, and form'd them all
for man.

Who mark'd the climates, varied every zone,
Dispensing all his blessings for the best.

Approach and bring from Araby the blest,
The fragrant cassia, frankincense and myrrh,
And meekly kneeling at the altar's foot,
Lay all the tributary incense down.

SMART, *on the Goodness of the Supreme Being.*

Such blank verse as this, is worse than rhyme.
It is subject to the same monotony by adopting
the same unvaried pause and cadence, and
it is less agreeable to the ear, being destitute
of those ding dongs, with which custom has
prevailed on us to be pleased.

How differently are we affected with the
blank verse of a Thomson, or a Milton !

H 2

A genius

A genius universal as his theme,
 Astonishing as chaos, as the bloom
 Of blowing Eden fair, as heaven sublime.

Thomson's Seasons.

How sweetly did they float upon the wings
 Of silence, thro' the empty vaulted night!
 At every fall smoothing the raven-down
 Of darkness, 'till it smil'd. *Milton.*

The true harmony of blank verse is produced by making the lines in general flow one into another, and by varying the pauses. The cadence should never be thrown upon the same points for more than two or three lines together, but should be shifted to a different part of the verse, and, as the variation of the harmony may require, be placed on the second, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, or tenth syllables. Sometimes the pause may be agreeably suspended thro' the space of two or three lines. The harmony of music, particularly the music of Handel,

whose harmony is more perfect than that of any other master, will afford many examples of imitation for the poet. He may also receive considerable assistance from musical melody, or air, which is the arrangement of simple sounds in a regular progression either ascending or descending. The swelling, the falling, the arresting of the strain, and the *Deceptio Auris*, when, after being brought to the very point of closing, it is unexpectedly continued, may all be successfully imitated in the various melody of blank verse.

I am of opinion that the numbers of this species of poetry are by no means brought to that perfection of which they are capable. The best poets have frequently disgraced them by running into the Couplet-monotony. Thomson's melody is in general better varied than that of Milton, for the latter admits of too many discords; though a competent

H 3

number,

number, judiciously introduced, is as necessary in poetry as in music. But Thomson has often fallen into the homotony of the couplet:

Here ceas'd the youth ; but still his speaking
eye
Express'd the sacred triumph of his soul,
With conscious virtue, gratitude, and love,
Above the vulgar joy divinely rais'd.

To avoid this defect, and in the progression of your melody to change your pauses, and vary your cadences with care, and art, is all the advice I have to give you concerning the structure of blank verse. Of the other modes of versification in my next.

LET-

L E T T E R XIV.

To the same.

The Subject continued.

I Do not look upon rhyme to be, as some have supposed, of monkish extraction. I think it is of a more ancient date. It was probably first invented for the aid of memory. The learning of the Druids was orally communicated to their disciples, and their precepts were retained memorially under those forms of verse in which they were delivered. It should seem, therefore, that they first found out the expedient of rhyme to make their verses more tenable. Unfortunate it is that it perished not with their system. But since custom has chained us to it, let us make the best of it.

In heroic rhyme some have attempted to avoid the monotony which is produced by the cadence falling constantly on the end of the couplet. The means they made use of was to suspend the cadence, by extending the sense, and keeping up the flow of the strain from the last line of a couplet to the first of the next. This may succeed in some cases where the harmony is imitative, as in the following passage:

While every Youth, with Fame's strong impulse
fir'd,

Press'd to the goal, and at the goal arriv'd,
Snatch'd each celestial wreath to bind his brow,
The muses, graces, virtues could bestow.

Isis, an Elegy.

The suspension of the cadence has not the same good effect in the ensuing verse; for beside that it has nothing of imitation to recommend it, it is suspended too long. The breath

is strained, and the ear is tired before we arrive at it.

All, all appear; on me they grateful smile,

The well-earn'd prize of every virtuous toil

To me with filial reverence they bring,

And hang fresh trophies o'er my honour'd
spring. *Ibid.*

It is evident from the last-quoted passage, and from a thousand others, which I might add to it, that the numbers of the couplet cannot dispense with the usual cadence at the end of it. That cadence, however, may be occasionally rendered stronger or weaker, and so may admit of some little variation. The couplet may close with any degree of punctuation from the comma to the period.

Then bade them leave the loftier scene awhile,

The pomp of guiltless state, *the Patriot tell,*

For bleeding Albion's aid the sage design,

To hold short dalliance with the tuneful Nine,

Triumph of Isis.

I see

I see the sable-suited prince advance,
 With lilies crown'd, the *spoils of bleeding France*,
 EDWARD ——— the Muses in yon hallow'd
 shade

Bound on his tender thigh the martial blade.

Ibid.

I have always been pleas'd with the flow of the following lines in Pope's imitation of Horace's Epistle to Augustus, and yet there is in some of the verses a great sameness of cadence, but perhaps it is the continuation of the sense thro' six or eight verses that makes the harmony more agreeable, as it is usual for the sense to be closed with the couplet.

Edward and Henry, now the boast of Fame,
 And virtuous Alfred, a more sacred name,
 After a life of generous toils endur'd,
 The Gaul subdued, and property secur'd,
 Ambition humbled, mighty cities storm'd,
 Or laws establish'd, and the world reform'd,
Clos'd their long glories with a sigh, to find
 Th' unwilling gratitude of base mankind.

To

To continue the sense generally as far as the harmony will bear, at least not to dissolve it constantly at the end of the couplet, and to vary the rests, so as to make them fall on different syllables in different lines, is all that can be done for the improvement of the numbers in the heroic couplet.

The numbers appropriated to the Elegy, where the rhyme is alternate, one would expect to be less exposed to a monotony of cadence, than the heroic measure; the length of the stanza too seems to promise a greater variety than the couplet. But this kind of measure has notwithstanding a disagreeable sameness in its structure, and every succeeding stanza is a faithful echo to the last. Yet is there something plaintive in it, some pathetic softness in the descending melody that seems fitted to express the tender passions. It is the peculiar language of love and melancholy,
when

when they soothe their sorrows with the pen-
sive muse.

Wilt thou, Monimia, shed a gracious tear
On the cold grave, where all my sorrows rest?
Wilt thou strew flowers, applaud my love
sincere,
And bid the turf lie light upon my breast?

On this account the numbers well deserve
our attention, and if any thing can be thought
of to prevent the identity of sound and ca-
dence in the several stanzas, it will be a va-
luable improvement.

Occasionally to make the last line of a
stanza flow into the first of the next, i. e.
to continue the melody, may contribute in
some measure to this end.

Th' applause of listening Senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes.

Their

Their lot forbade ; nor circumscrib'd alone

Their growing virtues, but their crimes confin'd,

Forbade to wade thro' slaughter to a throne,

And shut the gates of mercy on mankind.

All else that can be done, is to vary the pauses in each stanza so as to give a different air to the numbers. Thus, in one stanza, suppose the bar should be fix'd, in the first line, after the fourth syllable, in the second, after the fifth, in the third, after the fourth, and in the last after the fifth ; this succession might, in the next stanza, be entirely reversed, and by that means some little variety would be obtained.

To consider the harmony of every species of versification in Lyric poetry, distinctly, would draw me beyond all bounds. Moreover the attempt would be vain ; for the lyric muse is continually varying her numbers, and combining them in the manner that is most agreeable

able to her ear. I quarrel not with this freedom as it gives scope to that variety which is the soul of harmony. Provided the numbers do not run wild indeed; provided the analogy of the harmony be still preserved, and the recitative be duly introduced, the diversification of the numbers must always have a good effect. Even the variation of the rhyme will sometimes be pleasing to the ear.

Or, as the lark with matin-notes,
 To youth's new voyagers in spring,
 While over-head in air she floats,
 Attendant on unruffled wing,
 Warbles inartificial joy,
 My muse in tender strains shall sing
 The feats of VENUS' winged boy;
 Or how the nimble-footed HOURS,
 With the three GRACES knit in dance
 Follow the goddess ELEGANCE
 To HERE's court, in PAPHIAN bowers.

The Call of Aristippus

There

There is an easy lightness as well as variety in these numbers, which had their origin in France, and were introduced by our truly Anacreontic countryman, Mr. Gilbert Cooper. But this airy melody is only calculated for light subjects, and would be ridiculous if employed to express the grave or the sublime. It is the peculiar excellence of lyric poetry, that it can vary its numbers without impropriety, and can attune them to tenderness, majesty, or ease, as the subject may require.

L E T T E R XV.

To the same.

The Subject continued.

A Word or two on imitative Harmony. That sounds may sometimes be so combined as to bear a resemblance in their flow to the action they express is beyond a doubt. A verse may be constructed in such a manner as, when properly pronounced, to be rapid or slow, bold or soft, rough or smooth.

These are general properties of artfully constructed verses.

Thus a slow motion may be expressed,

The huge stone urg'd slow up the steep hill's
height.

Rapid

Rapid movement thus,

Down, with precipitate rapidity,
Rush'd down. _____

When a bold action is expressed, the verse moves with a great solemnity, a confirmed step suitable to the idea :

*Dash the proud Gamester in his gilded car,
Bare the mean heart, that lurks beneath a star.*

Pope.

How expressive of a soft and gentle action, is the liquid flow of the following couplet !

*Ye gentle gales beneath my body blow,
And softly lay me on the waves below.*

Pope.

Nothing is so easy to imitate by sounds as a rough motion ; notwithstanding it is but indifferently effected in this line :

The hoarse rough verse should like the torrent
roar.

The rough and roaring movement of a torrent is feebly imitated, and the introduction of the liquid word, *like*, is very unhappy. In the following verses the torrent moves more expressly:

Does it descend from a mountain?

Resistless, roaring, dreadful, down it comes.

Is it opposed in its passage by over-hanging rocks and woods?

It boils, and wheels, and foams, and thunders
through. *Thomson.*

Spumeus, et fervens, et ab objice sævior Ibat,
Ovid. Met.

It is more difficult to make the sound of the verse expressive of smoothness in a language which abounds with monosyllables. I have met with few unexceptionable instances of this expression, even

In the smooth music of harmonious Rowe.

The following lines are tolerably imitative of smoothness, but I own they are unsatisfactory to my ear :

Fair Thames, flow gently from thy sacred spring—

Soft as he mourn'd the streams forgot to flow—

Go gentle gales, and bear my sighs away.

Pope.

Possessed of these general properties of imitation, and capable of various combinations, words are made to imitate many particular actions and movements.

Thus we hear a thunder storm amongst the mountains in Wales :

Amid Carnarvon's mountains rages loud

The repercussive roar : with mighty crush

Into the flashing deep, from the rude rocks

Of Penanmour, heap'd hideous to the sky,

Tumble the smitten cliffs.——— *Thomson.*

The movement of the following verses is still more imitative :

Follows the loosen'd aggravated roar,
 Enlarging, deepening, mingling, peal on peal,
 Crush'd horrible, convulsing heaven and earth.
Ibid.

Then thunder oft with ponderous wheels rolls
 loud,
 And breaks the crystal urns of heaven.
Dyer.

When a stagnant lake is described, you can
 scarce get through the flow line :

In Syrian valley, *where now the dead sea*
 'Mong solitary hills infectious lies. *Dyer.*

Is not the flow of a cascade happily imitated
 in the following line ?

Fall in tunes || all adown || the green steep || ye
 cascades. ||

The four rests are very expressive, and the
 musical sound of the words contributes greatly
 to heighten the imitation. By the bye, Mr.
 Dyer, from one of whose fugitive pieces the
 above verse is taken, was perhaps the greatest
 master

master of imitative harmony that ever wore the British bays. What should seemingly be a paradox, he has more than once made sounds imitate stillness. For instance, when he describes a ship becalmed, how expressively do his slow-labouring words paint

The dead calms, that oft lie on those smooth seas!

You know that this imitative Harmony is not a new art with *us*. Shakespear abounds with instances of it, several of which you will find quoted in Mr. Webb's remarks on the beauties of poetry. There are numberless beauties of this kind in the works of that divine Poet which can only be discovered by a nice ear, and a just method of reading.

What a languid faintness does he throw into the line which expresses the passion of death!

The breath no sooner left his father's body,

But that his wildness, mortified in him,

Seem'd to die too.

Henry V.

Are we not assisted by the very form and
mechanism of the verses to

— behold the threaten sails,
Borne with th' invisible and creeping wind,
Draw the huge bottoms thro' the furrow'd deep?
Henry V.

Poets of an inferior rank have likewise aimed
at this kind of beauty; and sometimes have
succeeded. In a pastoral of Sir Charles Sedley
I remember the following verses :

Had early winds with a boase winter's sound
Scatter'd my ripening fruit upon the ground.
But now thy flocks creep feebly thro' the fields,
No purple grapes thy half-drest vineyard yields.

There is a happy simplicity in the following
verses, taken from the same author; but is
there not something in the flow of them ex-
pressive of festivity ?

Strephon ! O Strephon ! once the jolliest lad
That with shrill pipe did ever mountain glad !

The

The sound of many words is imitative of the action they express, on which account the labour of selection and combination is greatly lessened. I dare say that it gave Rowe very little trouble to compose the following couplet, however excellent it may be thought in point of imitative harmony:

Heard the loud floods of rolling sulphur roar,
And burst in thunder on the burning shore.

Translation of Lucan, B. VI. v. 1017.

After all, perhaps the several verses quoted in this letter, will be no otherwise of service to you, than as they convince you of the possibility and variety of imitative harmony. You will observe how sounds, under particular modes of combination, imitate the action, or motion, or object they express; but the art of combining sounds so as to produce that effect cannot be taught. Your ear alone must direct you in the whole œconomy of

verbal harmony. Poetical composition admits not of the certainty or precision, by which musical composition is directed, but even in that the imitative harmony is not to be attained by rule. It is the peculiar excellence of genius, and characterizes almost all the compositions of Handel and of Arne,

LET.

LETTER XVI.

To the same.

The Subject continued.

FOR the aid of judgment in the sentimental province, I would recommend one general and infallible precept. *Follow Nature.* It is only when we lose sight of her that we give into rants, flights, hyperboles, and every other species of false composition; and how very apt we are to do this, might be proved by instances drawn from the best writers. Even Nature and Homer were not always the same: while he is attempting to exalt his heroes into gods, he ascribes a meanness to his gods that would debase his heroes. As the translator of Longinus has it

Pluton

Pluton sort de son Trôn, Il pâlit, Il s'écrie.

But it is in our ideas of greatness and magnificence that we most commonly transgress the bounds of nature and probability ; and the writers of those countries particularly where the fine arts have made no considerable progress towards perfection, are almost universally chargeable with this defect.

The Spaniards and the Portuguese have no idea of copying nature from herself, or of drawing any thing comparatively great or sublime ; in every thing of that kind they go to the extent of imagination. To this, possibly, their native pride may add something, particularly when they are speaking of their kings or their countrymen. Thus a Spanish poet, in a poem entitled *Jerusalem conquistada*, describes the sea trembling, and death flying before the Castilians, when they followed their
king

king Alphonso, and our lion-hearted Richard
to the conquest of Jerusalem :

Es una fiera gente la de Espana

Que quando à pechòs una Empresa toma,

Los tiembla el mar, la muerte los esrana.

Lop. de Vega.

Another writer of that country composed the
following epitaph for Charles V.

Pro tumulo ponas orbem, pro tegmine cœlum,

Sydera pro faciibus, pro lacrymis Maria.

A Portuguese historian, speaking of a fort at
Japan, says the ditch was so deep, that one
might seemingly go down and make war
upon the devils in the infernal regions. *Que
parece se abria para ir fazer guerra a os demo-
nios no inferno.*

There are some readers who can relish these
intolerable hyperboles : For my part, I con-
fess that whatever is beyond all natural possi-
bility

bility gives me disgust ; nor can I subscribe to the following passage in Quintilian. *Tum hyperbole virtus, cum res ipsa, de qua loquendum est, naturalem modum excessit. Conceditur enim plus dicere : quia dici quantum est non potest, meliusque ultra quam citra stat oratio.* For though the subject to be described may exceed the ordinary bounds of nature, yet it certainly does not exceed the bounds of possibility, which the hyperbole very frequently and very unceremoniously does.

Do you think *Malherbe* defensible on the principles of Quintilian, when he compares the tears of the queen mother, on the death of Henry the Great, to an overflowing of the Seine ?

L'image de ces pleurs, dont la source fécond
Jamais depuis ta mort ses vaisseaux n'a taris,
C'est la Seine en fureur qui déborde son onde
Sur les quais de Paris.

And

And is he not still more absurd, more ridiculously extravagant in the following description of St. Peter's repentance ?

C'est alors que ses cris en tonnerres s'éclatent :
Ses soupirs se font vent, qui les chênes combattent ;

Et ses pleurs qui tantôt descendoient mollement,
Ressemblent un torrent qui des hautes montagnes

Ravageant et noyant les voisines campagnes,
Veut que tout l'Univers ne soit qu'un élément.

We have an English *Malherbe*, whom the Frenchman has not left far behind :

———— I found her on the floor,
In all the storm of grief, yet beautiful.

Sighing such breath of sorrow, that her lips,
Which late appear'd like buds, were now overblown ;

Pouring forth tears at such a lavish rate,
That, were the world on fire, they might have drown'd

The wrath of heaven, and quench'd the mighty ruin.

Lee.

There

There is no species of writing in which the poet is so apt to deviate from nature, and to be sentimentally wrong, as the dramatic. Instead of putting himself in the place of the character, and consulting his own heart, how he should express himself under the various influences of the passions, he gives way to his imagination, and indulges himself in flights and refinements at the expence of truth and propriety.

When Almeida leaves Osmyr in his cell, his eyes are with great propriety represented as staring eagerly after her; but when she is out of sight, the lover breaks forth, very unnaturally, into a philosophical harangue on the nature and properties of vision:

O Impotence of sight! mechanic sense,
Which to exterior objects ow'st thy faculty,
Not seeing of election, but necessity.
Thus do our eyes, as do all common mirrors,
Successively reflect succeeding images;

Not

Not what they would but must ; a star or toad :
Just as the hand of chance administers.

Mourning Bride.

This is a strange state of mind for a lover who had the moment before parted with his mistress, or rather for a husband who had parted with a beloved wife, and in such circumstances, that it was uncertain whether he should ever behold her more !

When a person in the height of rage, is advised by his friend to be patient, is it probable that he should be so adroit at metaphor and allusion, as to answer him in the following manner ?

Go, bid the moving plains of sand stand still,
And stir not when the stormy south blows high.
From top to bottom thou hast tost my soul,
And now 'tis in the madness of the whirl,
Requir'ft a sudden stop.

Dryden.

Yet

Yet you scarce ever find a man in a passion
but you catch him a simile making :

The storm is up, and my hot bleeding heart
Splits with the rack, while passions, like the
winds,

Rise up to heaven, and put out all the stars.

Let.

Mine is a grief of fury, not despair,
And if a manly drop or two fall down,
That sputtering into flames, works outward in-
to tears,

It scalds along my cheeks, like the green wood.

Dryden.

I believe it is, in general, vanity, rather than want of judgment, that draws us aside from nature. When the poet has conceived a striking similitude, or a pretty refinement, he cannot bear that it should be suppressed, and therefore puts it into the mouth of the speaker, however unnatural and improper it may be in his circumstances.

The

The French and Italian poets are, I think, more guilty of these sentimental faults than those of our own country. If they can say pretty things, it is all that many of them aim at, whether under the influences of anger, sorrow, or despair. Forgetting that just question of Quintilian, *sententiolisne flendum erit?* They dress up their very elegies in the fur-below of wit, and embellish their funeral sorrows with artificial plumage,

Thus, in the Italian poet, Tancred mourns over the tomb of his beloved Clorinda:

O Saffo amato et honorato tanto
Che d'entro hai le mie fiamme, e fuori il pi-
anto:

Non di morte sei tu: ma di vivaci
Ceneri albergo ove é riposto amore.

Is the turn in the two last lines expressive of the bewailing sorrows of love? *Sententiolisne flendum erit?*

LETTER XVII.

To the same.

The Subject continued.

ALMOST all the pleasure we receive from poetical composition, is derived originally from imitation. We are struck with lively portraits of the manners and passions. We preconceive the features which the poet should give them, and, if he agrees with our conceptions, he pleases by flattering our skill. Our ideas of all objects, being borrowed from the same Archetypes, cannot differ much from the ideas of others; if, therefore, we refer to our own conceptions we cannot greatly err even in sentimental imitation.

However,

However, if to indulge ourselves in pointed and curious turns of thought, we depart from the essential language and properties of nature, we must remember that in proportion to the pleasure which a well finished imitation would have given, will be the disgust that follows a different execution.

It would be needless for me to remind you, that the sentiment should always correspond with the subject; that light or trivial matters should never be dignified by grave or serious thoughts; and that, on the contrary, subjects of a serious cast should by no means be burlesqued by light or ludicrous sentiments. But though that may be unnecessary, perhaps it may not be equally so to recommend to you a conformity of sentiment, and to remind you that your thoughts should be of the same cast and complexion through the whole piece.

This caution is no less necessary for the prose-writer than for the poet, and I well remember the time when as a prose writer, I stood in need of it myself.

There is a style of sentiment as well as of language; and the analogy should be attended to in the former as well as in the latter. From want of observing this analogy, what strange medleys of composition have been produced! what tragical comedies, and what comical tragedies! Hence the origin of the Bathos, and of every ridiculous and heterogeneous combination:

Thou also mad'st the high celestial soul,
Maker omnipotent, *and thou the owl.*

Benevolence, a Poem.

The deists will their Bolingbroke forsake,
And earthquakes will no more our Island shake.

Female Conduct, a Poem.

Then let us for eternal bliss
Depend on holy writ;

And

And as for temporal affairs

Thank God for LEGG and PITT.

The Capital, a Poem.

———— Human Appetites how strong,
When love exults on Fancy's fairy plains,
Or hunger views the mutton at the fire!

The Passions, a Poem.

These specimens are sufficient to shew how very ridiculous incongruous sentiments appear, at least when they are so in a great degree. But a nice discerner will mark the impropriety, if there is the least want of congruity.

In descriptive poetry, two things, with regard to sentiment, ought to be observed, viz. that it neither be too trite nor too triflingly minute. It is the part of true genius to place familiar objects in a new point of view, and to utter nothing that is unworthy the *O's magna senaturum.*

L E T T E R XVIII.

To the same.

The Subject concluded.

UPON the conclusion of my last, I did not intend to carry my observations on the sentimental part of poetry any further. But one reflection more on that subject you will indulge with your attentions.

As in every piece of poetry, the style of the sentiment should be uniform through the whole piece, so in every particular sentiment the several parts should bear a due relation to the principal thought.

It is not at all uncommon to admit, in the same sentence, ideas that have no kind of connection

nection with each other. Thus Dryden says from Virgil,

And under Tyrian robes the Lamb shall bleat.

What reference has the bleating of a lamb to the robe that it wears? Virgil, however, is in this place, not much more excusable than Dryden:

Sponte sua *sandyx* *pascentes* *vestiet* agnos.

Pascentes has not much more relation to *sandyx* *vestiet*, than *bleat* has to the Tyrian robes, but one word served to make up the verse, as the other did the rhyme. It would be needless for me to multiply instances of this fault, with which almost every poem will furnish you, and I only mention it that you may be upon your guard against it.

I should now proceed to give you my thoughts on comparative imagery, but I avoid

it for two reasons. One is, that so wide a field would tempt me beyond the bounds I have prescribed to this series of letters, and the other, that I may some time or other write a regular essay on comparative imagery and figurative expression!

The first of these apologies might perhaps be sufficient with you; for, have I not already wearied you? Should it be so, yet have I no excuse but what is common to every other well meaning offender. Some comfort, however, I find in this reflection, that you cannot but be sensible how much, in all these letters, I have studied *your* advantage, more than my own entertainment. I have not indulged myself in speculation, because I had precept in view; and I have chosen rather to make observations, from which practical rules might be deduced, than to give the reins to imagination, and to chase every shadow
the

she would have started in the faery fields of
poesie.

May my labours be acceptable to you,
and I shall be satisfied: may they be useful,
and I shall be happy. But remember that if
you do not reduce those rules to practice,
which indeed I have been at some pains to
lay down for you; if you, in your turn,
will not sacrifice to the muses, I must number
the hours that have been thus employed,
among those that I have lost.

I mean not that you should have stated
times for your poetical labours, or that, like
Pope, you should write your fifty verses a
day: It is the favourable hour of fancy you
are to seize; the moment when the Miltonic
visitant arrives; when imagination is on
the wing. The Muse, like every other
mistress, has her *Mollia Tempora fandi*; and
must be courted only when the humour hits.

LET-

L E T T E R XIX.

To Mr. *****

THINK not, though you seldom hear from me, that I have forgot my old and valuable friend. I have loved you so long that it is now become almost as unnecessary to tell you so, as it would be for a man who has been many years married to pay that compliment to his wife: But as the wife might be dissatisfied if she received no tokens of her husband's affection, and accuse him, in her heart at least, of negligence, so I am apprehensive, however kindly you may interpret my silence, that you do not altogether forgive me for it.

Were I as willing to write to you as I am to think of you, or were thoughts communicable

cable without the labour of writing, you would not only be convinced of my attention to you every post, but every day. Mr. Cowley proposed to one of his absent friends that they should set apart a particular hour of the day to think of each other. This was one of the *thousand ways*, he said, they *should think upon to mock their separation*. But you and I, let me venture to say, find in our hearts that this would be a very poor expedient; and we should soon be convinced that to awaken reflection would be so far from alleviating absence, that it would render it more intolerable. For this reason I think of you as seldom as possible, and have appointed the *Trent* for the boundary of my ideas. The truth, however, is that they are, for the most part, as far beyond it as they are at present.

The imagination is not to be limited either by the height of mountains, or the depth of rivers.

rivers. Like the other immortal faculties, it triumphs over the bounds of time and space, and with equal ease carries your poor friend away captive to *Babylon*, or to *Bishop Auckland*. I have indeed indulged it so much of late in the fairy provinces of poetry and fable, that it has got a strange superiority; and I do not now so much wonder at the sceptic who doubted even of his own existence—so ideal does every thing appear to me! Of one thing, however, I am sure, that I am with truth and affection, &c.

LET.

LETTER XX.

To Mr. ———.

Y O U doubled the value of your last favour in sending it by the elegant, and multiloquous Captain ———. The man struck me dumb with his eloquence. Your letter was somewhat sullied, for which he made an apology, which I shall never forget. Every word was so well adjusted; and the periods were so regularly polished, and smoothed away, that I am sure he must have made it as he came along. *Le Voici!* “ I
 “ have brought you a letter, Sir, from Mr.
 “ * * *, but, to own the truth, I am perfectly
 “ ashamed to offer it you, so negligent
 “ have I been of my charge. You see here,
 “ Sir, it is soiled, and there, Sir, it is torn:
 “ but the one was not caused by frequent
 “ handling,

“ handling, nor the other by my curiosity
 “ to inspect its contents. Mr. ****
 “ knows my honour and all” — “ good
 “ Sir, pray Sir,” all the world knows it.
 “ The cause of these disasters I take to be
 “ this : having no *Livre de Poche*, I inad-
 “ vertently put the letter in company with
 “ a snuff-box and a tweezer-case. These
 “ being old companions, were jealous of a
 “ stranger ; and making their attacks at the
 “ same time in front and in flank, they have
 “ reduced it to the condition in which you
 “ see it.” The Captain, having shot away
 his whole ammunition, in this set speech,
 gave me time to enquire after your health,
 which I rejoice to find you are recovering so
 fast. He would not leave me without a scrawl.
 I was therefore obliged to commit this to the
 mercy of his snuff-box and tweezer-case ; and
 as you have given him the name of Belleroph-
 phon, so I have given him a Bellerophon’s letter.

LET-

L E T T E R XXI.

To the same.

WHAT insufferable encroachments are the women making upon the provinces of wit and learning! What shall we do? Shall we lay down our arms and submit to these usurpers, or shall we suffer them to incorporate with us? Shall we make marriages with them; and give unto them our sons, and take unto us their daughters? O blessed beef-stake days of Queen Bess! No literary Amazons then disturbed the repose of man: he enjoyed his superiority, through all the realms of learning absolute. But he can now no longer boast that distinction. We have not only female poets, but female philosophers.—Ladies who are deep in *Lock* and *Condillac*, and *Newton* and *Maupertuis*.
We

We have female mathematicians, historians, biographers and translators. Their numbers and powers in the field of letters are very formidable, and the more dangerous, as they are headed by officers of distinguished bravery. There's general *Carter*, and general *Jones*, who command the *Platonic* and *Parnassian* regiments, and colonel Sir *Quixot Lenox*, at the head of the regiment *de Romàn*. Beside these, there is a very formidable young officer coming into the field, whose name is *Whatsley*. This girl has the spirit of *Jones*, and the enthusiasm of *Carter*, and marshals her numbers with dangerous skill. There is also another rebel who has lain hid for sometime, but is now fully discovered to be in the plot. I assure you this is no contemptible enemy; for she has given very alarming proofs of her prowess in the following piece, entitled

A Prayer

A Prayer for Indifference.

Oft I've implor'd the Gods in vain,
 And pray'd till I've been weary ;
 For once I'll try my wish to gain
 Of *Oberon* the fairy .

Sweet, airy Being, wanton Sprite,
 That lurks in woods unseen ;
 And oft by *Cynthia's* silver light
 Trips gaily o'er the green !

If e'er thy pitying heart was mov'd,
 As ancient stories tell,
 And for th' *Athenian* maid who lov'd,
 You fought a wondrous spell —

Oh ! deign once more t' exert thy power,
 Haply some herb or tree,
 Sov'reign as juice of western flower,
 Conceals a balm for me.

I ask no kind returning love,
 No tempting charm to please :
 Far from my heart those gifts remove
 That tend to peace or ease.

Nor peace nor ease the heart can know,
Which, like the needle true,
Turns at the touch of joy or woe;
But, turning, trembles too.

Far as distress the soul can wound
'Tis pain in each degree :
'Tis bliss but to a certain bound :
Beyond is agony.

Take then this treachrous sense of mine;
Which dooms me still to smart ;
Which pleasure can to pain refine,
To pain new pangs impart.

Oh ! haste to shed the sacred balm !
My shatter'd nerves new-string ;
And for my guest, serenely calm,
The nymph *Indifference* bring.

At her approach, see *Hope*, see *Fear*,
See *Expectation* fly !
And *Disappointment* in the rear,
That blasts the promis'd joy.

The tear, which pity taught to flow,
The eye shall then disown :
The heart that melts for others woe,
Shall then scarce feel its own.

The wounds which now each moment bleed,
 Each moment then shall close,
 And tranquil days shall still succeed
 To nights of calm repose.

O fairy Elf, but grant me this,
 This one kind comfort send !
 And so may never fading bliss
 Thy flowery steps attend !

So may the glow-worm's glimmering light
 Thy tiny footsteps lead
 To some new region of delight,
 Unknown to mortal tread !

And be thy acorn goblet fill'd
 With heaven's ambrosial dew
 From sweetest, freshest flowers destill'd
 That shed fresh sweets for you.

And what of life remains for me
 I'll pass in sober ease;
 Half-pleased contented will I be,
 Content but half to please.

Such is the beautiful poem of which I have
 often wished to send you a copy, but had ne-

ver, till now, an opportunity of procuring one. Indeed I had some scruples about communicating it, being inform'd that the ingenious author desired it might not be copied. But those scruples are now removed.

You will easily perceive that its characteristic excellence lies in the delicacy of the sentiment; and, indeed, I never met with any thing that evinced a finer sensibility.

At the same time the expression is not only easy and elegant, but frequently very happy. Perhaps there is not in the English language a more striking instance of the *curiosa felicitas*, than the following stanza.

Nor peace nor ease the heart can know,
Which, like the needle true,
Turns at the touch of joy or woe,
But, turning, trembles too.

A fine imagination and a sensible heart generally go together, of which nothing can be a stronger proof than the *Prayer for Indifference*.

L 3

LET-

L E T T E R XXII.

To the same.

FROM *the mob of gentlemen who wrote with ease*, in the days of Charles the Second, among a very few more names, I would have you distinguish Sir *Charles Sedley*. This gentleman had a good deal of wit, some genius, and a tolerable ear. Sir *Charles*, indeed, wrote with ease as well as his contemporaries, but not with that kind of silly, unsentimental ease for which their poetry was, in general, deservedly censured. He studied human nature, and was distinguished for the art of making himself agreeable, particularly to the ladies; (for those verses of Lord *Rochester*, so often quoted, allude not to his writings, but to his personal address.) Hence those sentiments on the human passions, which

we

we find in his poems, are many of them striking, and peculiarly his : thus of the *belle passion* he observes that it seldom survives hope :

Love does seldom Hope survive.

His capital performance is a poem on marriage, of which state he has not only conceived just and noble sentiments, but has ridiculed with great wit and propriety those sordid motives that join so many wretched hands. He opens his poem with the view of that happy union in which our first parents were placed by their benevolent Creator. Such a scene was likely to animate the imagination, and awake the powers of genius. A poet of Sir *Charles Sedley's* sensibility, in particular, could not be cold upon it. His language is the effusion of rapture.

Circling her snowy neck, he sought her heart,
A fiery lover, without fraud or art.

The object of his restless thoughts was bliss,
And that he found in one embrace, one kiss ;

One clasp, one hug, one eager glance was more
Than worlds of pearl, or heaps of golden ore.

Then, then the new inhabitant was blest,
Ease watch'd his heart, and peace secur'd his
breast.

The following verses, taken from the same
poem, are very pretty and truly *Cowleian*.

Love, like a cautious fearful bird, ne'er builds,
But where the place silence and calmness yields :
He flyly flies to copses, where he finds
The snugging woods secure from blasts and
winds.

In another passage the poet seems to have had
Tibullus in his eye,

When clamorous storms and pitchy tempests
rise,
Cheek clings to cheek, and swimming eyes to
eyes.
When jarring winds and dreadful thunders roar,
It serves to make 'em press and love the more.

Nothing

Nothing can be more apposite than the following similes, applied to those who marry merely from lucrative motives.

Perhaps a cold respect they both may shew,
As impious men to a kind Dæmon do,
Who, when some skulking wealth he does unfold,
Honour and dread him for their new-found gold.

But view! unrobe the bosom of disguise!
Observe the strange aversion of their eyes!
With palpitations of regret they twine,
Like oil and water their false loves combine.

Some other similes in the same poem are intitled to no inferior degree of praise.

If crowded chests and glutted coffers can
Restore contentment to the anxious man,
Possess'd of those, if he from pain is free,
A troubled may be called a quiet sea,
Because there's pearl and amber on the shore—

In another place,

To

To various climes of tempers each are thrown,
 The frigid coupled with the torrid zone.
 Like curs of different natures in a chain,
 They're link'd in fear, and wear their bonds in
 pain.

But the liberal Sir Charles loses all patience
 when a woman gives herself up to avarice,
 and legally prostitutes her person for money.
 Such a one, he says,

Would wed a coffin, were the hinges gold.

His wit always rises with his indignation,
 and some ingenious comparative image is ge-
 nerally produced.

Thus might she clasp a loathsome toad in bed,
 Because he bears a pearl within his head.

But still, tho' wealth their griping senses feasts,
 At most they're but concatenated beasts.

As the excellence of lyric poetry, was at that
 time supposed to consist rather in elegant wit
 and

and ease, than in exuberance of fancy, imagery and enthusiasm, *Sedley* must have made no indifferent figure in that species.

You shall hear him then once more enforcing the generous doctrine of love-matches in the lyric strain :

See! Hymen comes ; how his torch blazes !
 Loofer loves, how dim they burn !
 No pleasures equal chaste embraces,
 When we love for love return.

When Fortune makes the match, he rages,
 And forsakes th' unequal pair,
 But when love two hearts engages,
 The kind God is ever there.

Regard not then high blood nor riches,
 You that would his blessings have :
 Let untaught love guide all your wishes :
 Hymen should be Cupid's slave.

The senseless sing-song, which was so fashionable in the court of *Charles* the Second, and
 which,

which, without either sentiment or connection, flowed from the silver pens of the mob of gentlemen, was burlesqued by *Sedley* with as much spirit and humour, as the *Arcadian* nonsense of lord *Suffolk* and his brethren was by *Swift*, in his song a la mode. *Sedley's* song is as follows :

Song a la mode.

O'er the desert, cross the meadows,
 Hunters blew the merry horn ;
 Phœbus chas'd the flying shadows,
 Echo, she replied in scorn,
 Still adoring,
 And deploring,
 Why must Thyrsis lose his life ?

Rivers murmur'd from their fountains,
 Acrons dropping from the oaks,
 Fawns came tripping o'er the mountains,
 Fishes bit the naked hooks ;
 Still admiring,
 And desiring,
 When shall Phyllis be a wife ?

Thus

Thus have I had the pleasure to introduce you to a new, and I presume, an agreeable acquaintance; for though you were ready to assign poor *Sedley* his portion with the mob of gentlemen, I think you owned that you had not seen his works. For my part, nothing gives me greater pleasure than the retrieving of any man's fame, but more particularly the reputation of the dead; and what I have thus privately done for Sir *Charles Sedley*, perhaps I may take some opportunity to make public.

I have been thinking of you
and how I wish to see you
and how I wish to hear you
and how I wish to feel you
and how I wish to know you
and how I wish to love you
and how I wish to be with you
and how I wish to be for you
and how I wish to be by you
and how I wish to be in you
and how I wish to be of you
and how I wish to be with you
and how I wish to be for you
and how I wish to be by you
and how I wish to be in you
and how I wish to be of you

INDEX.

A

A ARON Jacob, a rascally Jew, vol. i. letter
17.

ACROSTIC, an unfinished one to be sold,
vol. i. let. 17.

AFFLUENCE, the sunshine of it engenders
many more reptile than ethereal friends,
vol. i. let. 14.

AFFRONT, the term despicable, vol. i. let.
32.

ALDERMAN, impassive, description of one,
vol. i. let. 5.

ALERED, commanded his clergy to learn
some mechanic art, vol. i. let. 16.

ANACREON, an Anabaptist, vol. i. let. 2.

ANGER,

I N D E X.

ANGER, the expressions of a person under the influence of it not to be regarded, vol. i. let. 32.

ANSWERING a letter, the neglect of it censured, vol. i. let. 27.

ARISTIPPUS, quotation from his epistles, vol. ii. let. 9.

ARRANGEMENT of words, the most obvious the best, vol. ii. let. 10.

AUTHORS, the inconveniences to which they are exposed, vol. i. let. 22. Ridiculous circumstances which happened to one, *ibid.*

B.

BALSAC, his letters written for the public, vol. i. let. 37.

BENEVOLENCE, a virtue attainable by all, vol. ii. let. 2.

—————, a poem, Quotation from it, vol. ii. let. 18.

BLANK

I N D E X.

BLANK verse, capable of the most various harmony, vol. ii. let. 13. should, in its flow and structure differ greatly from heroic rhyme, *ibid.* its true harmony produced by making the verses flow one into another, *ibid.* Milton's too full of discords, *ibid.* Thomson's recommended, *ibid.*

BOLINGBROKE, lord, an observation of his, vol. i. let. 14.

BOWELS, Mr. a good-natured butcher, vol. i. let. 17.

BREECHES, a pair purchased by a hymn to Apollo, vol. i. let. 17.

C.

CALCULATION, in the mind of a miser, vol. i. let. 4.

CAPITAL, a poem, quotation from it, vol. ii. let. 18.

CARTER, Mrs. vol. ii. let. 21.

CATULLUS, a Moravian, vol. i. let. 2.

VOL. II.

M

CEPHA-

I N D E X.

CEPHALUS and **Procris**, a couplet on their statues, by a gardener, vol. i. let. 18.

CHARACTER, a ridiculous one, vol. i. let. 9.

———, of a lady, vol. i. let. 24.

———, of a gentleman and his lady, vol. ii. let. 7.

CHARITY, illiberal, when confined to particular nations, or societies, vol. i. let. 3. that of Englishmen too limited, *ibid.*

CHARLES V. King of Spain, his epitaph, vol. ii. let. 17.

CHRISTIAN duties, a scheme for evading two, vol. i. let. 14.

CHRISTINA, Queen of Sweden, ironically praised for her greatness of mind, vol. i. let. 19.

CHYMISTS, in religion, politicks, criticism and philosophy, vol. i. let. 1.

CLERGY, inadequate provision for the younger, vol. i. let. 15. Reasons why they should

I N D E X.

be allowed mechanical employments, vol.
i. let. 16.

COMMON sense, the greatest of all plagues,
vol. i. let. 35.

—— wealth of a poet, known to most
booksellers, vol. i. let. 17.

COMPARATIVE imagery, the beauties of it
derived from minute resemblances, vol. ii.
let. 9.

COMPARISON, all defects found by it, vol.
ii. let. 10.

COMPASSION, the distinguishing honour of
human nature, vol. i. let. 3.

COMPETITORS, for wealth and power, their
execrable wishes to each other, vol. i.
let. 4.

COMPLIMENTARY speeches, a snare to the
modesty of an author, vol. i. let. 22.

COMUS, the best poem in the English lan-
guage, vol. ii. let. 10.

I N D E X.

CONNECTIONS, mental as well as social necessary, vol. i. let. 35.

CONSCIOUSNESS, not probable that the Almighty will permit a temporary cessation of it in the human soul, vol. ii. let. 1.

CONSOLATION, not to be administered on the first attacks of grief, vol. ii. let. 1.

COOPER, John Gilbert, quotation from his Call of Aristippus, vol. ii. let. 15.

COUPLET, the numbers of it cannot dispense with the usual cadence at the end, vol. ii. let. 15.

CURATE of a parish, account of the particular method by which one supports himself, vol. i. let. 16.

CURIOSITY, allegorical account of it, vol. ii. let. 6.

D.

DEATH, like an expiring lamp, seems to recede as we approach, vol. i. let. 38.

I N D E X.

DEFORMITY would not have existed, had there not been different modes of beauty, vol. ii. let. 10.

DISTINCTION, the passion for it universally prevalent, vol. i. let. 9. Ridiculous pretences to it, *ibid*.

DIVINITY, man has something of it in his nature, vol. ii. let. 2.

DRAMATIC poetry, the Poet most apt to deviate from nature in that species, vol. ii. let. 17.

DRYDEN, when he turned papist, obliged to do penance, vol. i. let. 37. unnatural passages in his plays, vol. ii. let. 17.

DRUIDS, probably the inventors of rhyme, vol. ii. let. 15.

DYER, his excellence in imitative harmony, vol. ii. let. 16.

I N D E X

E.

EATING fish or flesh, nothing to a man's social character, vol. i. let. 2.

ELOISA, the new, by Rousseau, vol. i. let. 31.

ENTHUSIASM, poetical, may be awakened if connate with the mind, but cannot otherwise be acquired, vol. ii. let. 9. Methods of kindling it, *ibid.*

EPITAPHS, an usual thing with poets to write their own, vol. i. let. 7. The author's epitaph, *ibid.* Indecent one on the tomb of a lady, *ibid.* On a parish clerk, *ibid.*

ESTATE, the man that is born to one, exposed to many inconveniences, vol. i. let. 14.

EVIL, our happiness in not being affected by a distant view of it, vol. i. let. 5.

EVILS,

I N D E X

EVILS, natural, beauty no charm against them, vol. ii. let. 1.

——, moral, virtue not always a defence against them, *ibid.*

EXPRESSION, poetical, ought to be adapted to the sentiment, vol. ii. let. 11. Sometimes suffered by good poets to fall below it, *ibid.* Instances of its rising above it, *ibid.*

F.

FEMALE Conduct, a poem, quotation from, vol. ii. let. 18.

FOOL, happy if insensible of his folly, vol. i. let. 4.

FORTUNE, the necessary qualifications of her votaries, vol. i. let. 14.

FRENCH prisoner, a story of one, vol. i. let. 3.

FRIENDSHIP of the great, must be tinged with suspicion, vol. i. let. 14. Thoughts

I N D E X

on that which subsists between persons of different sexes, vol. i. let. 24.

G.

GARDENER, a poetical one at Corby Castle in Cumberland, vol. i. let. 18.

GARTERS, a pair purchased by a copy of verses, vol. i. let. 17.

GENIUS, when at the best, vol. ii. let. 8.

GRESSET, his poems recommended, vol. ii, let. 9. Quotation from, *ibid*,

H.

HACKNEY coach, the inconveniences of travelling in one, vol. ii. let. 5.

HAMMOND, a happy imitation of Tibullus, vol. ii. let. 11.

HAPPINESS, may be destroyed by circumstances, which it is not in the power of virtue to prevent, vol. ii. let. 1. Not to be

I N D E X

be found in abundance of knowledge,
vol. ii. let. 2.

HARMONY, imitative, strictures upon it,
vol. ii. let. 16. Several instances of it,
ibid. Not a new art, ibid.

HOPKINS, a better poet than Sternhold,
vol. i. - let. 8. Specimens of his poetry,
ibid.

HUNTING, an image of war, vol. i. let. 36.
Description of a Polish hunt, ibid.

HUTCHINSONIANS, make a hashed cherub
a proof of the Trinity, vol. i. let. 1.

HYMN to Hope, quotation from it to ex-
plain the nature of repetitions in poetry,
vol. ii. let. 10.

—— to Plutus, vol. i. let. 26. ——— to
Humanity, vol. i. let. 27.

HYPERBOLE, several instances of it, vol. ii.
let. 17. Quintilian's account of it cen-
sured, ibid. Spanish and Portuguese writers
remarkable for it, ibid.

IDEAS,

I N D E X

I.

IDEAS, of harmony, beauty, and sublimity,
 borrowed from the works of nature, vol.
 ii. let. 8. familiar, must be expressed by
 familiar phrases, vol. ii. let. 11. Poetical,
 derived from the visible works of nature,
 vol. ii. let. 9.

IDLENESS, allegorical account of it, vol. ii.
 let. 6.

JERUSALEM Conquistada, a Spanish poem,
 quotation from it, vol. ii. let. 17.

IMAGINATION, gradually ripened, vol. ii.
 let. 8. Not to be limited, vol. ii. let. 19.

————, poetical, improved by the ac-
 quisition of poetical ideas, vol. ii. let. 9.

INCUBUS, a poetical one, supposed to have
 violent commerce with innocent persons,
 vol. i. let. 18.

INDIFFERENCE, constitutional, may be called
 natural

I N D E X

natural philosophy, vol. i. let. 5. poetical
prayer for it, vol. ii. let. 21.

INDOLENCE, the means of happiness, vol.
ii. let. 3.

INDUSTRY, allegorical account of it, vol.
ii. let. 6.

JONES, Mrs. at the head of the female poets,
vol. ii. let. 21.

ISIS, an elegy, quotations from it, vol. ii.
let. 15.

ITALIAN poets, apt to refine too much, vol.
ii. let. 17.

JUDGMENT, poetical, perfected by compara-
tive observation, vol. ii. let. 8.

L.

LADIES, ironically praised, vol. i. let. 19.
Their encroachments on the provinces of
wit and learning, vol. ii. let. 21.

LAMB, Rev. Mr. his character, vol. i. let.
39.

LEARN-

I N D E X.

- LEARNING**, makes some men wise, others mad, vol. ii. let. 4.
- LEE**, the poet, censured for his hyperboles, vol. ii. let. 17.
- L'ENCLOS**, Madam de, asserts that inconstancy is the doctrine of nature, vol. i. let. 19.
- LETTER**, extraordinary one from a fine lady, vol. i. let. 10.
- LIFE**, the loss of the present would be a misfortune if attended with the loss of existence, vol. ii. let. 1.
- LOVE** of humankind, a principal source of pleasure, vol. ii. let. 2. Of nature kindles poetical enthusiasm, vol. ii. let. 9.
- LUCRETIVS**, a sophistical free-thinker, vol. i. let. 2.
- LUSUS Naturæ**, several instances of it in the human species, vol. i. let. 1.
- LYRIC** poetry, its peculiar excellence, vol. ii. let. 15.

MADAM,

I N D E X

M.

MADMAN, happiness of the merry one, vol. i.
let. 35.

MALHERBE, his absurd hyperboles, vol. ii.
let. 17.

MANKIND, two thirds of, come under the
denomination of fools or knaves, vol. i.
let. 6.

MARTINI, a principal object of a gentleman's
thoughts, vol. i. let. 4.

MELANCHOLY wears out the love of human-
kind, vol. ii. let. 1.

MICROSCOPE, for the mind, vol. i. let. 4.

MILTON, his Comus recommended, vol. ii.
let. 10. His blank verse too full of discords,
vol. ii. let. 13.

MIND, of a Connoisseur, inspected with a
microscope, vol. i. let. 4. Of a miser,
ibid.

MISERY,

I N D E X

MISERY, by preying upon the heart, destroys its sensibility, vol. ii. let. 1.

MISFORTUNES, those who have contemplated them at distance only, know not how they can bear them, vol. i. let. 5.

MODES of faith interfere not with the obligations of society, vol. i. let. 2.

MOUNTEBANK, a man of great benevolence and humility, vol. i. let. 34.

MOURNING Bride, a passage in that tragedy censured, vol. ii. let. 17.

MUSE, has her *mollia tempora fandi*, vol. ii. let. 18.

N.

NATURE, diverts herself with making odd creatures, vol. i. let. 1. Appears most to advantage, when her attributes are not over-heighted, vol. ii. let. 11.

NATURE

I N D E X

NATURE and Fortune, a gentleman the object of their contention, vol. i. let. 39.

O.

OBLIGING, the possibility of it without being obsequious, vol. i. let. 26.

OPINION, in whatever light a man's own places him, he expects that the world should look upon him in the same, vol. i. let. 9. Of others, how far a man should be affected by it, vol. i. let. 1.

ODE to the Genius of Westmorland, vol. i. let. 25.

— of Catullus, translated, vol. i. let. 2.

P.

PAGE, Nicholas, his epitaph, vol. i. let. 7.

—, John, his zeal for the memory of his father, vol. i. let. 7.

PARENTHESES, too long or too frequently admitted a fault in poetry, vol. ii. let. 10.

PARSLEY,

I N D E X.

PARSLEY, Mrs. a green grocer, a kind-hearted woman, and fond of poetry, vol. i. let. 17.

PASSIONS, a poem, quotation from, vol. ii. let. 18.

PASTORAL, specimen of one in blank verse, vol. i. let. 23.

PASTORAL poetry, ought to be referred to the golden age, vol. i. let. 23.

PERSUASION, religious, most men follow that of their fathers, without enquiring into its merit, vol. i. let. 2.

PHILIPS, Mrs. Constantia, her motives for retiring into Jamaica, vol. i. let. 19.

PHILOSOPHERS, demolish one system to build another in its place, vol. ii. let. 3.

PHILOSOPHY, the end of it the limitation of our desires, vol. i. let. 14. The instructress of poetry, vol. ii. let. 9.

PHOEBUS, a poet's dog, remarkable for his sagacity, vol. i. let. 17.

PLATO,

I N D E X

PLATO, a methodist, vol. i. let. 2.

PLANTATIONS form an epocha in the life of the planter, vol. i. let. 38. have a moral use in marking the progress of time, *ibid.*

PLEASURES, fall short of imagination, vol. i. let. 25. The sensual deceive us more frequently than the intellectual, *ibid.* Lose their credit with those who can enjoy the entertainments of the understanding, vol. i. let. 26. All pleasures imaginary, vol. i. let. 35.

PLINY, the author's objections to him, vol. i. let. 37.

PLEONASM, a common fault in poetry, vol. ii. let. 12. Several instances of it, *ibid.*

POET, should not be satisfied with superficial knowledge, vol. ii. let. 9. Ought to be well skilled in natural philosophy and metaphysics, *ibid.* The elements of moral and natural knowledge insufficient for him, *ibid.* Should attend to minute re-

I N D E X.

lations and resemblances, *ibid.* Reasons why he is fond of retirement, *ibid.* Wearing apparel, household goods and stock in trade of one to be sold, vol. i. let. 17.

POETRY, two kinds of it equally entertaining, vol. i. let. 18. The middling sort only intolerable, *ibid.* The art of it progressive, vol. i. let. 8. Requires a perfect knowledge of philosophy, vol. ii. let. 9. Men are apt to judge of it as children do of painting, vol. ii. let. 11.

POPE, quotation from his imitation of the Epistle to Augustus, vol. ii. let. 13.

PORTUGUESE, their writings full of hyperboles, vol. ii. let. 17.

POWEL, Mr. the fire-eater, his great merit, vol. i. let. 34. Supposed to have dropt from a comet, *ibid.*

PREFERMENT, the road to it dangerous and dirty, vol. i. let. 13.

P A I D E,

I N D E X.

PAIDE, has frequently the same influence over reason as anger hath, vol. i. let. 32.

PRINCE of Wales, poem on his birth, deposited under a penny-worth of cheese, vol.

i. let. 17.

Q.

QUADRILLE, a necessary employment, vol. i. let. 11.

QUINTILIAN, a passage in his writings censured, vol. ii. let. 17.

QUOTATIONS, the absurdity of filling letters with them, vol. i. let. 13.

R.

REASON, no difference whether the use of that faculty be restrained, or neglected, vol. i. let. 14.

RECIPE for killing time, vol. i. let. 2.

RECONCILIATION, to take the first step towards it, a proof of wisdom, vol. i. let. 32.

I N D E X.

REDBREAST, monody of one, vol. i. let.

12. Verses addressed to one, *ibid.*

REDUNDANCES, frequent in the works of the best poets, vol. ii. let. 12.

REFLECTIONS, seasonable on the importance of the name of England, a pamphlet so called, vol. i. let. 3.

REPETITION, an injudicious one of the same words, ought to be avoided in poetry, vol. ii. let. 9. Instance of such a repetition in the Night Thoughts, *ibid.* Pleases in poetry from the same cause as the recitative in music, *ibid.* Its use in didactic poetry, *ibid.*

RETIREMENT, the proper allotment for age, vol. i. let. 38.

RHYME, calls for superfluous epithets and unessential images, vol. ii. let. 13. Like the ringing of five bells in a country steeple, *ibid.* First invented for the aid of memory, vol. ii. let. 15.

RICH-

I N D E X.

RICHARDSON, notions of extravagant virtue, caught from his writings, vol. i. let. 11.

RICHES, an estimate of them, vol. i. let. 14.

Aid the intercourse of friendship, but endanger its sincerity, *ibid.* Add a heavy load to the duties of life, *ibid.* Frequently overturn the virtues of temperance and humility, *ibid.*

ROCHESTER, Lord, his famous verses on Sir Charles Sedley allude to his personal address, and not to his writings, vol. ii. let. 22.

S.

ST. ALBANS, Lord, an observation of his on the use of riches, vol. i. let. 14.

SCANDAL, a necessary pastime, vol. i. let. 11.

SCHOOL-BOYS robbing an orchard, simile from, vol. i. let. 11.

I N D E X.

SEDLBY, Sir Charles, his character as a poet,
vol. ii. let. 22. Extracts from his poems,
ibid.

SELF-DENIAL, and mortification, method of
evading those duties, vol. i. let. 14.

SENECA wrote his letters for the public,
vol. i. let. 36.

SENTIMENTS, necessary to observe their ana-
logy in poetry, vol. ii. let. 18.

———— incongruous, ridiculous instances
of such, ibid.

SEVIGNE', Madam, asserts the sincerity of a
lady's tears, vol. i. let. 19.

SHAKESPEAR, a learned observer of nature,
vol. ii. let. 9.

SHERIDAN, an observation of his on blank
verse, vol. i. let. 23.

SILVER, Samuel, narrative of his expedition
to print a visitation sermon, vol. i. let. 30.

I N D E X.

SIMPLICITY, in poetry recommended, vol.

ii. let. 11, 12.

SNIP, Isaac, a taylor, his connections with the author, vol. i. let. 17.

SORROW, the qualities and effects of it, vol.

ii. let. 1. An enemy to virtue, to piety, to health and to friendship, *ibid.*

SOUL, its nature and properties incapable of an unconscious state, vol. ii. let. 1.

SPANIARDS, seldom copy nature in their poetry, vol. ii. let. 17. Go to the extent of imagination in every thing, *ibid.* Absurdity of one of their poets, vol. i. let.

18.

SPIRIT of contradiction, consequence thereof, vol. i. let. 17.

SPIRITS departed, may be assigned to various modes of Being unknown to us, vol. ii. let. 1.

STANZAS from an elegy written by a gentleman of Oxford, vol. i. let. 39. Addressed

I N D E X.

- dressed to a lady who favoured the author
with an elegy on the search of happiness,
vol. ii. let. 3.
- STERNHOLD, his poetry inferior to that of
Hopkins, vol. i. let. 8.
- STOCK in trade, of a poet to be sold, vol.
i. let. 17.
- STOUT, Patrick, a linen-draper, his con-
nections with the author, vol. i. let. 17.
- STYLE, its analogy to be observed in sen-
timent as well as in language, vol. ii. let.
17.
- SUPERFLUITIES, difficult to keep clear of
them in descriptive poetry, vol. ii. let. 12.
- SUSSEX, an excursion to the coast of, a poem,
vol. i. let. 18. Curious quotations from
the same, *ibid.*
- SUZE', Madam de, her motive for changing
her religion, vol. i. let. 19.

TANCRED,

I N D E X.

T.

TANCRED, his verses on the tomb of Clarinda, vol. ii. let. 17.

TASSO, translation of his Jerusalem stolen by a Jew, vol. i. let. 17.

THEOCRITUS, the simplicity of his poetry, vol. ii. let. 11. A passage quoted from his Idyllia, and translated, *ibid*.

THOMSON, quotations from his Seasons, vol. ii. let. 9.

THOUGHTS, do not acquire originality from being expressed in an uncommon combination of words, vol. ii. let. 11.

TIBULLUS, proved to be a papist, vol. i. let. 2. His writings a pure model of simplicity, vol. ii. let. 11. Quotations from his elegies, *ibid*.

TOM JONES, a principal object of a gentleman's thoughts, vol. i. let. 4.

TRANS-

I N D E X.

TRANSPOSITIONS, ought rarely to be admitted, even in poetry, vol. ii. let. 10.

TRAVEL, allegorical account of it, vol. ii. let. 6.

TRIUMPH of Isis, a poem. Quotations from it, vol. ii. let. 15.

U.

UNITIES, the three dramatic, the illegitimate off-spring of Taste, vol. i. let. 32.

Prejudicial to genius, *ibid.* Generally wound probability, instead of aiding it, *ibid.*

V.

VANITY, generally draws us aside from nature; vol. ii. let. 17.

VERSES, by a gentleman of Oxford, vol. i. let. 39.

—— addressed to the Rev. Mr. Lamb, *ibid.*

VIRGIL,

I N D E X.

VIRGIL, held the doctrine of purgatory, vol.

i. let. 2. Quotations from his Georgics,
vol. ii. let. 9.

VIRTUES, the excess of them dangerous, vol.

i. let. 27.

VOITURE, censured for his quotations, vol.

i. let. 13.

W.

WHATELEY, Miss, an ingenious poetess,
vol. ii. let. 17.

WESTMORELAND, an ode to the genius of,
vol. i. let. 25.

———— the bird of melancholy,
a stranger to that county, vol. i. let. 31.

WEARING apparel, of a poet, vol. i. let. 17.

WHITE HORSE in Piccadilly, apostrophe to,
vol. ii. let. 6.

WISE MAN, how far he ought to be affected
by the opinion of others, vol. i. let. 6.

WISE

I N D E X

Wise and good men; their opinions ought
to affect us only when they coincide with
truth and our own conscience, vol. i. let. 6.

WIT, a hasty ebullition of it not to be
deemed an affront, vol. i. let. 32.

WORDS have their different degrees of dignity
as well as things, vol. ii. let. II. The
property of true criticism to suit them to
the objects they express, *ibid.* The luxury
of words destroys precision, *ibid.*

WORD-chasing in poetry, censured, vol. ii.
let. 10. Curious instances of it in a pas-
sage of the Night Thoughts, *ibid.*

Y.

YOUNG, Dr. unreasonable in wishing for
two pair of shoes, vol. i. let. II.

YOUNG Poets, apt to be too profuse of words,
vol. ii. let. II.



